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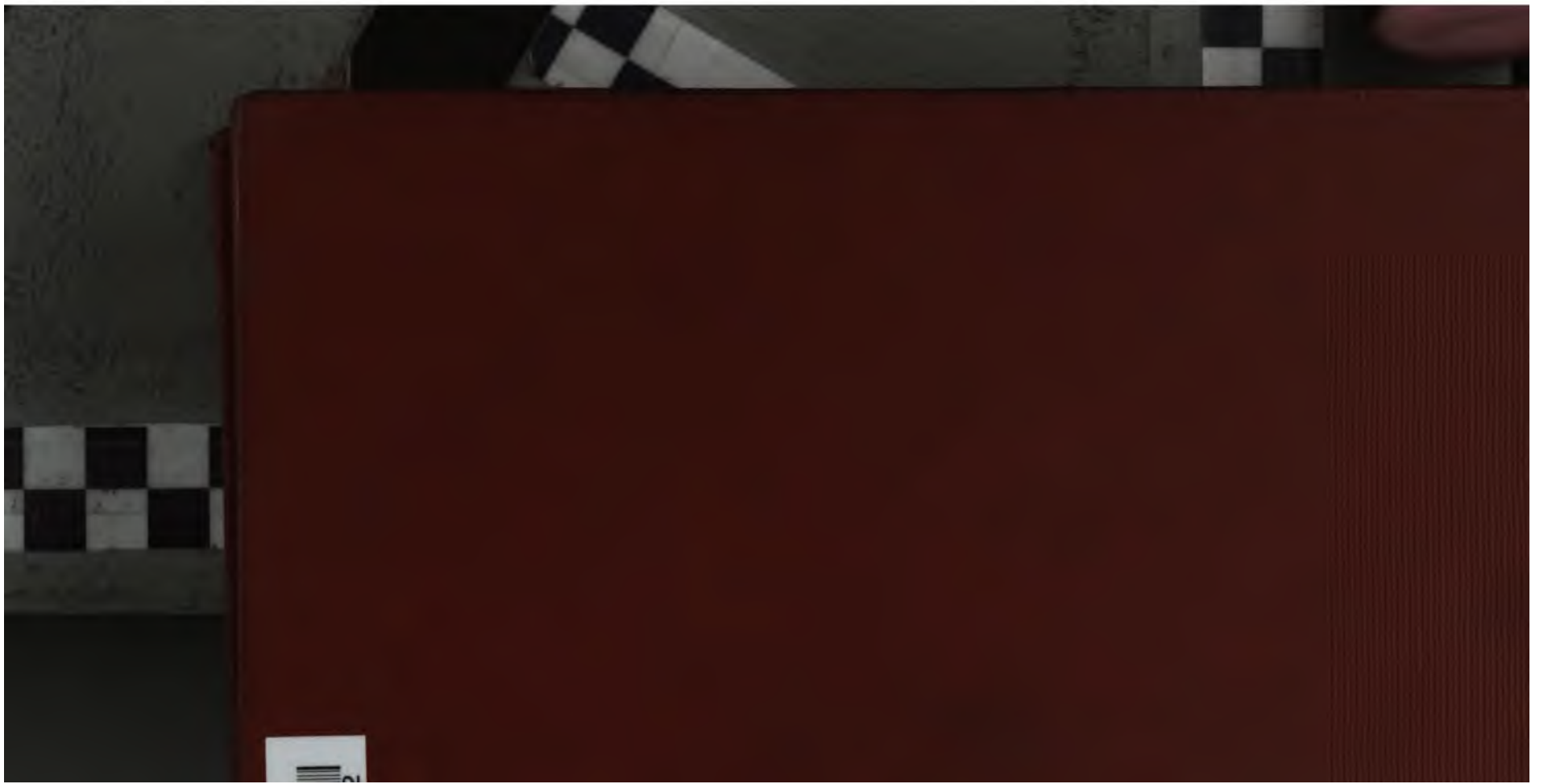
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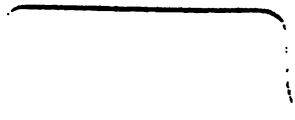
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THE ILIAD OF HOMER

[redacted]

THE ILIAD OF HOMER

DONE INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

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CONTENTS

BOOK I.—*Of the bitter contention between hero and king; of pestilence on earth and strife in heaven* 1

BOOK II.—*Of the dream of lies, and the king's trial of the hearts of the people. Of the war-muster of Greeks and Trojans* ... 26

BOOK III.—*Of the duel between Paris and Menelaus* 62

BOOK IV.—*How the covenant was disannulled by the arrow of treachery, and the war-hosts closed in battle* 81

BOOK V.—*Concerning the battle-prowess of Tydeus' son Diomedes* ... 104

BOOK VI.—*How Andromachê, Hector's wife, took her last farewell of the hero* 144

CONTENTS

BOOK VII.—*How Aias man against man did battle with Hector the godlike* 163

BOOK VIII.—*The counsel of Godfolk, the Trojans' prevailing, the glory of Hector* 183

BOOK IX.—*How in vain with their gifts they essayed to appease the wrath of Achilles* 206

BOOK X.—*Of the slaughter wrought in the night by Tydeus' son and Odysseus* 235

BOOK XI.—*How the mightiest chiefs of Achaia were stricken amidst of the battle* 259

BOOK XII.—*Of the rampart-storming, till Hector bursteth the gates asunder* 294

THE ILIAD OF HOMER.

BOOK I.

Of the bitter contention between hero and king; of pestilence on earth and strife in heaven.

THE wrath of Achilles the Peleus-begotten, O Song-queen, sing,
Fell wrath, that dealt the Achaians woes past numbering;
Yea, many a valiant spirit to Hades' halls did it send,
Spirits of heroes, and cast their bodies to dogs to rend,
And to fowls of ravin,—yet aye Zeus' will wrought on to its end
Even from the hour when first that feud of the mighty began,
Of Atreides, King of Men, and Achilles the godlike man.
Which of the Gods into hate and contention drave these twain?
The son of Latona and Zeus, for his wrath was the war-king's bane, [died;
That he sent forth a plague through the host, and the people were smitten and
For Atreides rejected the prayer of his priest when Chryses cried,
When bereft of his daughter the sea-swift ships of Achaia he sought,
To deliver from thraldom his child, and a countless ransom he brought;
And the wreaths of Far-smiter Apollo in holy hands he bare
On a golden sceptre, and cried unto all the Achaians there,

And to Atreus' sons, the arrayers of war-folk, uttered his prayer :

" Ye sons of Atreus, Achaians battle-harness-dight,
May the Gods vouchsafe you, which dwell in the halls of Olympus' height,
To smite Troy-town, and to win safe home from your war-toils done :
But take ye my ransom, give back my child, my darling one,
For dread of Far-smiter Apollo, Zeus Allfather's son."

Then shouted the other Achaians thereto in favouring wise
To have respect to the priest, and to take the ransom-price.
But it pleased not the spirit of Atreus' son, Agamemnon their lord,
For he shamefully drave him forth, with a stern and a masterful word :

" Let me not find thee, old man, by the hollow galleys more,
Neither tarrying now, neither wending again to the ship-fringed shore,
Lest of the wreath of the God and his sceptre thy help be small !
I will not give her up :—nay, sooner shall old age find my thrall
In Argos, afar from her fatherland-home, in our palace hall,
While yet at the loom she doth pace, and arrayeth her lord's bed there.
Begone, and provoke me not—that thy feet safe homeward may fare !"

And the old man quailed at his eyes, and shrank from the threat half-spoken :
By the shore of the thunderous-tumbling sea he went heart-broken :
Far thence he went, and alone that old man cried in prayer,
Cried to Apollo the King, whom Lêto the fair-tressed bare :

" Hear, Silverbow, who art warder of Chrysê and Killa's fane,
Hear, thou who in might of thy godhead o'er Tenedos' isle dost reign !
Smintheus ! if ever I wreathed thy temple in lovely wise,
If ever I burnt unto thee on thine altar goodly thighs

Of bulls and of goats, vouchsafe this boon to the stricken in years—
May thine arrows requite the Danaan men for these my tears!"
So spake he with prayer and strong crying, and Phœbus Apollo heard;
And adown from the crest of Olympus he swept with soul wrath-stirred.
His bow on his shoulders he bare, and his quiver, the doom-enfolder:
Clashed they and clanged they, the shafts on the wrathful Archer's shoulder,
At the swoop of him earthward: his coming was like to the onrush of night.
Down sat he aloof from the galleys; he sped forth a shaft on its flight:
Terribly rang the twang of the silver lightning-bright.
First on the mules of the host and the fleetfoot hounds it came,
Thereafter his bitter-keen dart at the Danaan men did he aim,
Smiting them: flared evermore the close-thronged death-pyres' flame.
Nine days up and down through the host were the God's wrath-arrows sped:
On the tenth by Achilles the people were called to the folkmote-stead;
For Hêrê the white-armed Goddess moved him to do this thing,
For her heart yearned over the Danaans, seeing them perishing.
And so soon as the place was thronged with the host of the gathering folk,
Arose swift-footed Achilles amidst of the people, and spoke:
"Atreides, now must we wander aback overseas, I trow,
And again get us home, if perchance we may scape from the death-stroke so,
If battle and plague together shall lay the Achaians low.
Go to now, let us enquire of a prophet or priest touching this,
Or a dream-arreder,—for dreams be sent of Zeus, I wis,—
Who shall tell us why Phœbus Apollo's anger burneth so hot,
Whether for vow or for hecatomb-gift remembered not;

If so be that his heart may be moved to accept the sacrifice-smoke
Of lambs and of goats, and to turn from the people his pestilence-stroke."
So spake he, and sat him down, and the great bird-seer rose there,
Kalchas, Thestor's son, who had knowledge of things that were,
And of things that were yet for to be, and the things that had been before,
And who guided the galleys Achaian safe to the Troyland shore
By the gift of Phoebus Apollo, the matchless augury-skill.
And he lifted his voice, and he uttered his rede of his heart's good will:
"O Achilles the Zeus-beloved, thou biddest me tell the tale
Of the wrath of Far-smiter Apollo, the king of the arrows of bale.
Yea, I will speak, but with covenant-plight swear thou to stand
By my side with all thine heart to defend me with speech and with hand;
For I trow I shall kindle the wrath of a man that with mighty sway
Ruleth the Argive folk, and him the Achaians obey.
For what is a vassal's strength when the wrath of a king is afire?
Though he quell for a season his fury, and bridle his grim desire,
Yet he layeth up malice against him for days to be in his heart,
That the flame of his wrath may consume him:—but thou, wilt thou take my [part?"
Answered and spake to him fleetfoot Achilles, Peleus' son:
"Fear not, whatsoever thou knowest of prophecy-lore, say on.
For I swear by Apollo the Zeus-beloved, O Kalchas, to whom
Thou prayest, and showest the Danaan folk the high Gods' doom,
No man, while I live, while the light of the sun on the earth I see,
By the hollow galleys shall e'er lay violent hands on thee;
No man of the Danaans all, not though that name should be

Agamemnon—mightiest far this day of Achaians is he."
Then of good heart was the seer, and the peerless prophet spake:
"Not for a vow he condemneth you, not for a hecatomb's sake;
But because of his priest, whom king Agamemnon in shameful wise
Drave hence, and restored not his daughter, nor took the ransom-price:
Wherefore Far-smiter hath given us woes, and yet shall give.
He shall turn not the pestilence-horror away, that the people may live,
Or ever we give back the flashing-eyed maid without ransom or price
To her dear-loved father, and bring a hecatomb-sacrifice
Unto Chrysê: so shall we bend him, our prayers find grace in his eyes."
So spake he, and sat him down in his place, and arose thereupon
Agamemnon the hero-king, wide-ruling Atreus' son,
In anguish of wrath, and his passion-beclouded spirit with ire
Was filled, and the light in his eyes was a blaze as of flaming fire.
Unto Kalchas first, with an evil glare in his eyes, spake he:
"Prophet of ill! never yet hast thou spoken good unto me!
Evermore is it dear to thy soul to be boding the evil doom:
Never yet hast thou spoken a blessing, or caused that a blessing should come.
And now mid the Danaan folk art thou prating thy prophet's tale,
How that for this, good sooth, Far-smiter is working their bale,
Because that I would not accept the splendid ransom-store
For Chrysêis the maiden, seeing my spirit desireth sore
Within my pavilion to keep her, who dearer is grown unto me
Than the lady my wife Klytemnestra, for nowise worser is she,
Not in stature, nor loveliness, nor in wisdom, nor skill of the loom.

Yet even so will I yield her, if this be the high Gods' doom :
Rather I would that the soul of the people should live than die.
But prepare ye a prize for me straightway, lest I, and only I
Of the Argives, abide without honour, for this were a shame to be said :
For to this are ye witnesses all, that my prize from mine hands hath fled."
Out spake swift-footed Achilles the godlike, and answered him then :
" Atreides renowned above all—gain-grasping above all men !
How shall the mighty-hearted Achaians give thee a prize ?
We wot not of any abundant store that treasured lies ; [remain :
But the spoil that from cities we took hath been parted, and naught doth
'Twere unmeet that the people should bring it together, to share it again.
But thou, yield her up to the God, and so shall the host repay
Threefold and fourfold the loss of the king in the triumphing day,
When Zeus shall give us the strong-walled city of Troy for a prey."
Then out spake lord Agamemnon, and grimly answered he :
" Not thus, O Achilles the godlike, how valiant soever thou be,
Essay thou to cozen : thou shalt not persuade me, nor catch me with guile.
Ha ! wouldst thou that thou shouldest keep thy prize, and that I the while
Should be sitting with empty hands ?—' Restore yon maid,' saidst thou ?
Ay, if the mighty-hearted Achaians will find for me now
A guerdon of no less worth, that mine heart may be satisfied so—
But and if they shall not give, I, even I, will not spare to go
And choose thy prize, or the meed that Odysseus or Aias hath.
I will have it : to whomso I come, he shall chafe in his helpless wrath.
But for this my pleasure another season shall serve full well :

But now will we drag us a black ship down to the vast sea-swell ;
And therein will we gather us oarsmen enow, and therein will we place
The hecatomb : thither Chrysêis, the maid of the lovely face,
Will we bring, and let one man mighty in counsel be leader of these ;
Let Idomeneus, Aias, or godlike Odysseus fare overseas,
Or thou, O Peleus' son, terror-clad above all men that live,
To offer our sacrifice, that the Smiter from far may forgive."
Darkened the brow of Achilles, loud did the scorn of him ring :
" Ah me !—O shamelessness-clad ! O heart of greed in a king !
How shall Achaian hereafter thine hest glad-hearted obey,
Or to go on a foray, or strive with his might against men in the fray !
I came not, I, for hate of the spearmen of Troy oversea
Hither, in battle to smite them, for what have they done unto me ?
Never they drave my kine or my steeds to their ships for a spoil ;
Never on hero-fostering Phthia's deep-loamed soil
Did they harry my harvests, seeing betwixt their land and mine
Is many a shadow-ribbed mountain, and leagues of loud sea-brine.
But we followed thee, king without honour or shame, that thine heart might joy,
To avenge Menelaus and thee, O frontless hound, upon Troy !
But thou carest not, thou, for that ; it is naught in thy thankless eyes !
Yea, thou dost threaten to snatch from me my guerdon-prize,
For the which I have striven and toiled, fair gift of Achaia's sons.
Never my guerdon is like unto thine, when our mighty ones
Have smitten a fenced city of Trojans, a fair-built keep :
Yet ever the brunt of the fight do I bear ; the battle-tide-sweep

Is stemmed by mine hands: yet whensoever they share the prey
Greater by far is thy guerdon, and I to my ships must away
With a scanty meed, yet dear, when fainteth my strength in the war.
—Now will I hence unto Phthia, for better I count it by far
Homeward to speed with my galleys: Achilles, I trow, no more
Here biding dishonoured, for thee shall gather treasure-store."

Unto him Agamemnon, King of Men, made scoffing reply:
"Ay, turn thou and flee, if thy soul so craveth!—it is not I
Will beseech thee to tarry: there yet shall be found a faithful band
Who shall honour the king; yea, Counsellor Zeus on my side shall stand.
But for thee—of kings Zeus-fostered I hate thee most of all,
For dear evermore to thine heart are battle and war and brawl.
What though thou be never so strong, God-given thy strength is, I trow.
Go with those galleys of thine and thy vassals homeward,—go!
Be a tyrant of Myrmidon slaves!—Tush, naught care I for thee,
Neither quail at thy fury!—List to my threat, who threatenest me:—
Since Chrysêis is reft from me by Phoebus Apollo's hand,
Her will I send away with my ship and my comrade-band:
But I will take Brisêis the lovely-cheeked; I will go,
Even I, to thy tent; I will take thy guerdon, and so shalt thou know
How much above thine is my might, and all other shall dread henceforth
To exalt himself against me, and to measure with mine his worth."

Stung was the soul of Peleides: his heart in his lion-breast
Wavered in madness of anguish, and wist not which were best—
Or to snatch from beside his thigh his sword whetted keen for the fray,

And to dash the others aside, and to leap on Atreides, and slay,
Or to hush the storm of his wrath, and to bridle his furious mood.
While tossed to and fro in the thoughts and intents of his spirit he stood,
And forth of the scabbard was drawing the great sword's battle-flame,
Sent down by Hêrê the white-armed from Heaven Athênê came,—
Seeing Hêrê looked upon both alike with loving care:—
Behind him she stood, and she grasped Peleides' golden hair,
Seen only by him,—was none of the rest that beheld that sight:—
Astonied sore was Achilles, and turned him, and knew forthright
Pallas Athênê, and flamed her eyes with awful light.
And the hero spake to the Goddess, and sped the winged word-flight:
"Why art thou come, O child of Zeus the Aegis-lord?
To behold Agamemnon Atreides' despiteful deed and word?
Nay, but I tell thee,—and this shall, I trow, be the end of our strife,—
Himself by his tyrannous dealing ere long shall spill his life."
Then unto him did Athênê the grey-eyed Goddess say:
"I have come with intent to assuage thy fury, if thou wilt obey,
From Heaven,—it was Hêrê that sent me, the Goddess of arms snow-fair,
Who looketh on thee and the king alike with loving care.
Go to now, refrain thee from strife, and draw back thine hand from the hilt;
But smite him with words, and reproach him for evils to come of his guilt:
For this will I tell thee, and surely fulfilled shall the promise be:—
Fair gifts three times so many ere long shall be brought unto thee
For this tyrannous wrong:—refrain thee, and hearken to her and to me."
Answered swift-footed Achilles, and spake to the presence divine

"O Goddess, I cannot choose but regard her hest and thine,
How angered soever in spirit; yea, this is the better deed.
Whoso obeyeth the Gods, him hear they in time of need."
Then on the hilt of silver he stayed his brawny hand;
He hath thrust back into the scabbard the mighty battle-brand,
Obeying the hest of Athênê;—but she to Olympus had fled;
To the throng of the Gods in the halls of the Aegis-lord had she sped.
But Peleides turned yet again upon Atreus' son, and raged
With words of defiance: not yet would the storm of his wrath be assuaged:
"Wine-overcome, with the eyes of a dog, and the heart of a deer!
Never for fight hast thou dared to array thee with buckler and spear
With the warfolk; with heroes Achaian to go to the ambush by night
Never hast dared in thy spirit; not thou!—it were death in thy sight!
Better it is that thou prowl through Achaia's war-host wide,
Robbing of gifts whosoever shall speak against thee and thy pride!
King that devourest the folk!—over nidderings rulest thou;
Else had thine outrage, Atreides, been wrought for the last time now.
But I tell thee,—and this great oath shall confirm the words that I say:—
By this my sceptre, which never shall bourgeon with leaf or spray,
Now that it once hath left the stock on the hills forlorn,
Never shall break into green, for the knife from around it hath shorn
Leaflet and bark, and now by Achaia's sons is it borne,
By the princes that sit in judgment, and aye defend the right
By appointment of Zeus: and this shalt thou know for an oath of might:—
Verily soon for Achilles the sons of Achaia shall languish

Sore yearning; and thou shalt be helpless to help them, for all thine anguish,
What time beneath Hector the manslayer's feet by hosts they shall bow
Dying; and thou with the shame of it—tear thine heart shalt thou
In thy wrath and thy ruth for thy scorn of Achaia's champion now!"
Wrathful he spake in their ears, and he dashed to the ground at his feet
His sceptre bestudded with gold, and he sat him adown in his seat;
While Atreides overagainst him raged. Rose Nestor the old
Of the winsome, the clear-ringing voice, the shepherd of Pylos' fold: [rolled·
More sweetly the speech from his lips than the rills from the honeycomb
And two generations by this had he seen that had lived and were dead,
Men that with him in the days overpast had been born and bred
In Pylos the hallowed, and he of the third generation was king.
So with kindly intent he spake in the midst of the stormy ring:
"Alas and alas! on Achaia-land cometh bitter annoy,
And Priam and Priam's sons shall rejoice with exceeding joy;
And for this shall the hearts of the rest of the Trojan folk be fain,
For the tidings of all this strife that is kindled betwixt you twain,
You that in counsel be first of the Danaans, foremost in war!
Nay, hearken the rede of the old man: younger than Nestor ye are.
For in sooth in the days overpast with mightier men than ye
Have I gone in and out, yet never did these make light of me.
For never such men to this day have I seen, and I shall not see,
Even such as Peirithous, Dryas,—a strong folk-shepherd was he,—
Kaineus, and Exadius, Polyphemus the god-strong one,
And Theseus glorious to see as the Deathless, Aegeus' son.

Mightiest of all menfolk ever fostered on earth were they ;
Mightiest they were, and they grappled with mightiest foes in the fray,
With the Centaurs, the mountain-haunters, and terrible slaughter they wrought.
I went forth out of Pylos, I joined me to these, in their battle I fought ;
For they called me themselves, and I hied me afar, from a distant land.
So there in the fight did I play my part ;—no man might stand
Before these in the battle, none that abideth on earth this day.
Even they gave ear to my counsel, my rede were they wont to obey.
Hearken ye also to me, for this were the better part :
Thou, take not away from the hero the maiden, king though thou art,
But leave her even as at first the sons of Achaia gave.
And thou, O Achilles, consent not in deadly defiance to brave
The king, for the honour that falleth to him is not as thine.
For to him that beareth the sceptre hath Zeus given glory divine.
And if thou be the greater in strength, whom a Goddess-mother bore,
Yet he is the greater in power, who ruleth o'er many more.
Atreides, O bridle thine anger!—yield to me now when I pray!
Refrain from Achilles thy wrath, for that he is the one great stay
Of all the host of Achaians in battle's evil day."
Answered and spake to the ancient of days Agamemnon the king :
" Yea, fitly and well, old sire, hast thou spoken everything.
But this man would fain be exalted above all others beside ;
Over all would he fain have the mastery, all men as king override,
And give the word unto all,—there be some will not brook it, I doubt.
What if the Gods everlasting have made him a spearman stout ?

Is it they that exalt him a brawler, a prince of taunt and flout?"
Brake forth Achilles the godlike, in mid-speech taking the king:
"Good sooth, and a byword were I for a dastard and niddering,
If in all things to thee I should cringe, whatsoever thy word may be!
Unto others give suchlike commands, but not—for thou shalt not—to me.
Give the word, an thou wilt: 'tis not I that will longer brook thy behest.
This will I tell thee moreover; thou treasure it up in thy breast:
Not I for the sake of a girl will in battle mine hands uplift,
Nor with thee nor another: ye gave and repent,—take back your gift!
But of all things else that be mine by my swift black ship on the strand,
No whit shalt thou take an I will not, nor wrest it out of mine hand.
Try, if it please thee, try, that these which be here may know:
In a moment about my spear shall thy very heart's blood flow!"
So strove they twain, and with words of defiance hot on their lips
Arose, and dispersed the assembly beside the Achaian ships.
And Peleides away to the shapely galleys, and on to his tent
Along with Menoitius' son and his battle-fellows went.
But Atreus' son ran down a swift ship into the sea,
And he chose for her oarsmen a score, and the hecatomb there placed he
For the God, and the fair-cheeked maid Chrysêis aboard did he bring,
And he seated her there: and Odysseus was captain, the counsel-king.
So went they aboard, and over the watery ways sailed they.
But Atreides commanded the people to cleanse their defilement away.
So they cleansed their pollution, and into the sea the offscourings they threw;
And unto Apollo a perfect hecatomb they slew

Of lambs and of goats, on the shore, where the furrows unharvested are ;
And the savour enwreathed with the smoke streamed up to the heavens afar.
So wrought they throughout the host ; but Atreides forgat not yet
His feud with Achilles, and spared not to do even after his threat.
To Talthybius then and Eurybates straight did he turn him and say—
Heralds they were of the king, and his henchmen swift to obey :—
" Unto the tent of Achilles Peleus' son go ye :
Brisêis the lovely-cheeked shall ye lead by the hand unto me.
But and if he shall yield her not, myself will come with more,
And take her by force, and so shall his plight be worse than before."
So speaking, he sped them thence, and with stern behest he sent.
By the shore of the harvestless sea exceeding loth they went.
To the Myrmidon tents they came, and on to the galleys they hied ;
And the hero sitting they found by his tent and his black ship's side.
Little, I ween, did Achilles rejoice when their faces he saw.
There stood they twain, in dread of the king, and in shame-stricken awe :
No word did they speak unto him, neither any request made they :
But he knew it within his heart, and thus did the hero say :
" Hail, messenger-heralds of men and of Zeus the king of the skies !
Draw near ; Agamemnon only is guilty of this in mine eyes,
Not ye, whom he for Brisêis the maiden hath hitherward sent.
Come hither, Patroclus the Zeus-born : lead her forth of my tent,
And deliver her into their hands, and they shall be witnesses then
In the sight of the blessèd Gods, in the sight of mortal men,
And before yon ruthless king, if ever all else shall fail,

And they have sore need of me to defend them from shameful bale.
For verily onward he rusheth with spirit destruction-blind,
And he hath no wit to discern what lieth before and behind,
Lest in fight by the ships his Achaians the gates of death might find."
So spake he, Patroclus thereafter the hest of his dear friend wrought,
And from out the pavilion Brisêis the lovely-cheeked he brought,
And gave to their hands, and again to the galleys Achaian they passed:
Sore loth that lady departed with them. And Achilles at last
Brake suddenly forth into weeping, and turned from his comrades aside,
And sat by the cold grey sea, looking forth o'er the harvestless tide:
And outstretching his hands to his mother in passionate prayer he cried:
"Mother mine, since thou barest me doomed to a little span of days,
Well might the Olympian King have vouchsafed to me glory and praise,
High-thundering Zeus: but now small honour have I in his sight;
For Atreus' son wide-ruling hath done me foul despite:
Agamemnon himself hath gotten my guerdon, hath taken my right."
So spake he with tears fast-falling: his mother heard when he cried,
As she sat by the Ancient her sire in the depths of the moaning tide.
Swift from the cold grey sea like a still sea-mist did she rise,
And in front of her son she sat as the tears ran down from his eyes;
With her hand she softly caressed him, and spake, and uttered the word:
"Why weepest thou, son? with what grief is thy spirit within thee stirred?
Speak out, hide it not in thine heart, that we both may know thy pain."
Heavily groaning swift-footed Achilles made answer again:
"Thou knowest; and why should I tell thee, who knowest all full well?

Unto Thêbê we went, on Eetion's hallowed city we fell ;
And we sacked it, and hitherward brought we all the spoil away ;
And fairly the sons of Achaia divided amongst them the prey.
And they chose out Chrysêis the fair for Atreides' prize of war.
But it was so, that Chryses, the priest of Apollo the Smiter from far,
Came where the brass-clad Achaians' swift ships darken the shore,
To deliver from thraldom his child, with a countless ransom-store ;
And the wreaths of Far-smiter Apollo in holy hands he bare
On a golden sceptre, and cried unto all the Achaians there,
And to Atreus' sons, the arrayers of war-folk, uttered his prayer.
Then shouted the other Achaians thereto in favouring wise
To have respect to the priest, and to take the ransom-price.
But it pleased not the spirit of Atreus' son, Agamemnon their lord,
For he shamefully drave him forth, with a stern and a masterful word.
And the old man turned and departed in anger fierce and fell :
And Apollo gave ear to his prayer, for he loved him passing well ;
And he sent on the Argives the arrow of bale, and the people died
One after other : the shafts of the God upon every side
Sped through the wide war-host of Achaians. The seer unto whom
Dark things were revealed made known unto us Far-smiter's doom.
Straightway I counselled to turn the God from his anger, and yield.
Then wrath seized Atreus' son, and he rose forthright fierce-willed,
And he spake and he uttered a threat, which is even now fulfilled.
For her are the keen-eyed Achaians this day in a ship fleet-faring
Bringing to Chrysê, and gifts to the Archer-king are they bearing :

But that other a little agone from my tent did heralds lead,
The daughter of Briseus, given by Achaia's sons for my meed.
But thou, if thou canst, be a champion now of thy hero-son.
Go to Olympus, and pray unto Zeus, if thou ever hast done
Any kindness to strengthen the heart of Zeus, when need was most.
For many a time in my father's halls have I heard thee boast
How thou savedst Kronion the cloudrack-shrouded long ago—
Thou only of all the Immortals—from shameful overthrow,
When the other Olympians were fain to have put him in chains, when his foes
Were Hêrê, Poseidon, when Pallas Athênê against him rose.
But thou camest, O Goddess, and thou didst break in sunder his bands,
Swift-calling to far Olympus him of the hundred hands,
Whom the Gods Briareos name, but all men on earth that be
Aigaion: stronger is he than his father, the Lord of the Sea.
And he came, and he sat by the side of Kronion in pride of his might.
Then nowise the Gods bound Zeus, for they shrank from his face in affright.
Of these things put him in mind; sit thou at his feet, and embrace
His knees, if perchance he will deign to help Troy's war for a space,
And cause the Achaians 'twixt galleys and sea to be hemmed, and to fall
Slain, and to know their king for the joy and defence of them all.
That Atreides also may know, Agamemnon of far-stretching rule,
How he scorned Achaia's best with the ruin-spite of the fool."

Then fast fell Thetis' tears, and low to her son moaned she:
"Ah me, child, why did I nurse thee!—what horrors were born with thee!
Ah couldst thou have sat by the galleys unvexed by tears or grief,

Seeing thy weird is not for long, but all too brief—
But now art thou swift of doom and wretched of days above all:
Wherefore in evil hour did I bring thee forth in mine hall.
I will hie me with this thy tale to Olympus' snow-heaped crest,
Unto Thunder-lover Zeus, if perchance he will grant my request.
But thou by the ships fleet-faring abide, and nurse alway
Thine anger against the Achaians, and utterly hold from the fray.
For Zeus to the Ocean-stream departed yesterday
To the Aethiops' holy banquet: the Gods all went in his train.
Not till the twelfth day dawn will he come to Olympus again.
Then to his palace upreared on foundations of brass will I go:
Then will I kneel at his feet; he will hearken my prayer, I trow."
So spake she, and hasted away, and she left him there alone
Raging his heart within for the maid of the lovely zone,
Whom they took from his hands by force.
Now Odysseus by this was come
To the haven of Chrysê, bearing the sacred hecatomb.
And so soon as the galley had gotten within the deep-channelled bay,
They furled the sail, and down in the black hull stowed it away;
And the mast to the trestle they lowered by loosening either stay
With haste, and the oars they plied to gain the mooring-ground.
And forth did they cast the sleepers, and fast the hawsers they bound.
And forth of the galley adown to the sea-beach sprang the men,
And forth for Far-smiter Apollo the hecatomb brought they then.
And forth did Chrysêis step from the ship overseas that had sped.

And her many-counselled Odysseus thence to the altar led:
To the hands of her father he gave her, and thus to the priest spake he:
"Chryses, the King of Men Agamemnon hath sent me to thee
To bring thee thy child, and to offer to Phoebus a sacrifice
For the Danaans' sake, to the end we may yet find grace in his eyes
Who hath sent on the Argives affliction of moan and anguished cries."
Then into the hands of her father he gave her: with joy he embraced
His darling; and they for the God full orderly ranged in haste
The glorious hecatomb, that fair-built altar around;
And they washed their hands, and they sprinkled the barley-grains unground;
And for them did Chryses earnestly pray, uplifting his hands:
"Give ear to me, Silverbow, in whose strength Chrysê stands,
And Killa the hallowed, who rulest in might over Tenedos' isle!
Hear, of a surety thou heardest my prayer when I cried erewhile,
And didst honour thy priest, and didst smite Achaia's folk full sore.
Now therefore give ear to me now, and vouchsafe me this one boon more:
Turn from the Danaan folk thy ghastly plague this day."
So spake he, and Phoebus Apollo heard that suppliant pray.
Then after the prayer they sprinkled the barley-grains unbrayed,
And they drew back the necks of the beasts, and they severed their throats, and flayed:
And the bones of the thighs they cut out, and, doubly folding it over,
With the fat they wrapped them about, and with pieces of flesh did they cover.
And the sire laid all on the wood, and he poured bright wine on the brands;
While beside him the young men stood with the altar-forks in their hands.
And after the sacrifice, and the tasting of entrails due,

The rest into pieces they sliced, and they ran the long spits through, [drew.
And they heedfully roasted the same, and the roast from the flames they with-
So when they had ceased from their toil, and the banquet was all prepared,
They feasted, and none lacked aught of the banquet equal-shared.
And when craving for meat and for drink no more in their breasts was found,
The boys filled up the bowls, and with flame-flushed wine they crowned,
And they bare to the feasters, and spilled the sacrifice-drops all round.
And all day long they sang the wrath of the God away;
Fair sons of Achaia, the Healer in sweet strains chanted they,
Hymning the Smiter from far; soul-gladdened he hearkened their lay.
And the sun went down in the sea, and the darkness covered the land;
And beside the ship's stern-hawsers they lay, and they slept on the strand.
And so soon as the Dawn rose-fingered through folds of her mist-veil broke,
They sailed oversea for the wide war-host of Achaian folk.
And Apollo sent them a breeze fast-following over the tide, [480
And they set up the mast in the ship, and they spread the white sail wide.
And the sail bellied out with the blast, and the cutwater plunged, as she drave
The foam from her bows with the hiss and the roar of the sundering wave:
And over the dash of the surges running her race she flew.
So when they were come to the wide war-host of Achaia, the crew
High up on the shelving sands the black-hulled galley drew.
Then laid they the long-stretching lane of the underprops below;
And this way and that way thereafter by galley and tent did they go.
And all this while by the galleys sat that mighty one
In his wrath, Zeus-born fleet-footed Achilles, Peleus' son.

Never he went to the folkmote, the praise of the wise to win,
Never to war ; but he wearied and pined his heart within,
There biding, and longed for the onset-shout and the battle-din.
But at last it befell, when the twelfth morn dawned from that ill day,
That back to Olympus returned the Gods that abide for aye,
Even all : Zeus led them. And Thetis forgat not now the request
Of her son, but she floated up from the sea's broad-heaving breast,
And dawn-mist-veiled to the mighty Heaven and Olympus she soared :
And sitting apart from the rest she found the Thunder-lord,
On the topmost crest of Olympus' ridges dizzy-hung.
And before him she sat her down, and around his knees she clung
With her left hand, the while she stretched her right hand forth to his chin ;
And to Zeus Kronion the King did she her petition begin :
" O Zeus Allfather, if ever I helped thee by word or deed
In strife with the Deathless Ones, O grant me this boon in my need :—
Honour my son ; swift-doomed above all his fellows is he ;
And lo, Agamemnon the king hath entreated him shamefully.
He hath gotten his guerdon, hath reft it away in his kingly might.
O Counsellor Zeus, Olympian, do thou maintain his right,
And grant to the Trojans victory-triumph, till right be done
By Achaia's host for the wrong, and honour be paid to my son."
So spake she, and Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper answered her naught,
But long sat silent : and Thetis, even as erst she had caught
His knees, so clung she and clave she, and prayed yet again to the God :
" O promise me this, and confirm the same by the seal of thy nod,

Or refuse it, and so shall I know—for thou art not fear-overborne—
How that I, among all the Gods, am held in deepest scorn."

Sorely disquieted Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper spake:
" There shall surely come mischief of this, that thou biddest contention awake
'Twixt Hêrê and me, when her railing words shall provoke me sore.
Even now mid the Deathless she brawleth against me evermore,
And saith that still in the battle I fight for Troy, her foe.
Now hie thee back again, that nothing Hêrê may know.
And for this that thou askest will I take thought, to bring it about.
Behold, I will give thee the seal of my nod, that thou mayest not doubt:
For this is the mightiest pledge that the Deathless win from me;
For it goeth not back, nor deceiveth; fulfilled without fail shall it be,
Whatsoever I seal with the nod of the head of my majesty."

He spake, and the dark brows bent for the mighty promise sealed.
Waved round the deathless head of his majesty full-revealed
The ambrosial locks, and mighty Olympus rocked and reeled.

So when they had thus taken counsel, they parted: thereafter she
From the far-flashing height of Olympus plunged to the fathomless sea.
And Zeus passed on to his hall; and the Gods all rose up there
Out of their thrones in their Father's presence: was none would dare
To await him as onward he came; rose all before their king.
There sat he adown on his throne. Howbeit ware of the thing
Was Hêrê, for she had beheld how Thetis the Silver-shod,
The child of the hoar Sea-ancient, in counsel had sat with the God.
And she chode with Kronion Zeus, and she cried right bitterly:

" What God, O guileful-hearted, hath taken counsel with thee?
Dear is it ever to thee, in secret from me and apart
To devise and ordain dark counsels: never with willing heart
Hast thou deigned to declare it to me, whatsoever thy purpose hath been!"
Answered the Father of Gods and men unto Heaven's Queen:
" Look not, O Hêrê, to know each word that proceedeth from me,
My wife though thou art; thou shalt find it all too hard for thee.
But whatso it fits that thou hear, of all the high Gods then
None shall before thee know it, and none of the children of men.
But whatso I will shall be kept from the Gods of mine heart's good pleasure,
Question not thou thereof, neither search for my counsel-treasure."
Queen Hêrê the lovely-eyed made answer to him, and she said:
" What manner of word hast thou spoken, O Kronos' son most dread?
Wherein have I searched out thy counsel in days overpast, or enquired?
Nay, ever at quiet thou framest all things that thy soul hath desired.
But now am I sorely afraid in mine heart lest the Silver-shod
Shall overpersuade thee—Thetis, the child of the hoar Sea-god.
For she sat by thy side in the dawn-mist; thy knees did she there embrace:
Unto her hast thou pledged thee, I think, by thy nod, unto honour to raise
Achilles, and many Achaians in fight by the galleys to slay."
Answering her did Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper say:
" Ha! thinkest thou?—ever thou thinkest!—thou spiest on me evermore!
But for all this naught shalt thou compass, but farther than ever before
Shalt thou be from mine heart: more bitter thy lot shall be in this.
And what if it be as thou think'st?—be thou sure that my pleasure it is.

Nay, sit thou still, and be silent, and render obedience to me;
Lest nothing the Gods avail thee, not all in Olympus that be,
If in wrath I draw nigh thee, and lay my resistless hands upon thee."
So spake he, and quailed Queen Hêrê, the Goddess lovely-eyed:
Silent she sat, hard-curbing the heart of tameless pride:
But wroth were the Heaven-abiders in Zeus's hall as they heard.
Then Hephaestus the God-smith craft-renowned took up the word,
To comfort his dear-loved mother, Hêrê of arms snow-fair:
"Ah sure 'twere a bitter chance, and a thing no heart could bear,
If thus for the deathlings' sake ye twain have strife and jar,
And stir up a brawl 'twixt God and God: it shall surely mar
All joy of the glorious feast if triumphant the evil shall be.
Now my mother in love I entreat—yea, her own heart pleadeth with me—
To speak Allfather fair, lest the wrath and the might of our sire
Break forth, and the feast be a storm of confusion because of his ire.
For, were this the Olympian's pleasure, the hurler of the levin
From our thrones could dash us: stronger is he than the host of heaven.
But thou with unangry breath draw near, and with winsome word;
So shall we soon find grace in the sight of Olympus' Lord"
He spake, and he sprang to his feet, and the double-chalice cup
Did he place in the hands of his mother, and spake, as he lifted it up:
"Be strong, mother mine, to endure the grief on thine heart that lies,
Lest, O my belovèd, I see thee smitten before mine eyes.
And for all mine anguish then no help couldst thou have of mine hand,
For a terrible foe is the Lord of Olympus, if one should withstand.

Yea, I mind me how once on a day, when I rushed to thine help in thy strait,
By the foot did he grasp me, and hurl from the threshold of Heaven's gate.
All day long was I falling, and low as the red sun hung,
Into Lemnos was hurled: scant breath in my fainting breast yet clung:
But gently the Sintians lifted and tended the whirlwind-flung."
So did he speak, and the Goddess the white-armed Hêrê smiled,
And smiling received the chalice out of the hand of her child.
And he set him to pour to the rest of the Gods from the left to the right,
For all drawing forth of the bowl sweet nectar rosy-bright.
And loud from the Gods ever-blest did the quenchless laughter rise,
As they saw Hephaestus strain and pant through the halls of the skies.
So through the livelong day, till the sun's down-going, there
They feasted, and nothing they lacked of the banquet's equal share.
Neither lacked they delight of the lovely lyre, which Apollo bore,
And the Muses who chanted with sweet voice changing about evermore.
But at last, when the sun went down, and the light of his splendour was gone,
Homeward they hied them, and laid them down to rest, each one
In the place where his palace stood, which Hephaestus the craft-renowned
The twin-right-armed, had fashioned with cunning marvel-crowned.
And Olympian Zeus the Lightning-hurler couchward hath hied,
Where erst he had lain, when over him rippled the slumber-tide.
So he went up and slept, and Hêrê the gold-throned lay by his side.

BOOK II.

Of the Dream of Lies, and the King's trial of the hearts of the people. Of the war-muster of Greeks and Trojans.

NOW the rest of the Gods and the car-borne heroes lay in sleep
All night; but not over Zeus stole slumber sweet and deep.
But ever he mused in his soul in what wise honour should crown
Achilles, and many a Greek by the galleys be stricken down.
And thus, in the thoughts of his heart, him seemed it were best to be done,
To send a baneful dream to the king, even Atreus' son.
And he called up the shadowy shape, and the winged words leapt from his [lips:
"Speed thee, O Dream of bane, to Achaia's sea-swift ships:
Get thee to Atreus' son Agamemnon's tent on the strand,
And without fail say to him all, whatsoever I now command.
Thou tell him—let all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed
By their thousands, for now shall he take the Trojans' town broad-wayed;
For that now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus' palace-hall
No longer at variance are, for that bowed are the hearts of us all
By the prayers of Hêrê, and now to the Trojans shall woes befall."

So spake he, and hasted the Dream, so soon as he heard the command;
And swiftly he came to Achaia's fleet-winged ships on the strand,
And to Atreus' son Agamemnon, and found that battle-lord
Asleep in his tent, and the balmy slumber around him was poured.
In the shape of Neleus' son did he stand by the king's head then,
Of Nestor, whom most Agamemnon revered of the ancient men.
In his likeness the heaven-sent vision uttered forth his rede:
"Thou sleeping, O son of Atreus the war-wise lord of the steed!
It beseems not a counsel-chief through the livelong night to slumber,
Unto whom be committed the folk and searchings of heart without number.
But now give heed to me straightway: from Zeus am I sent unto thee,
Who careth for thee with exceeding compassion, afar though he be.
He bids thee that all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed
By their thousands; for now shalt thou take the Trojans' town broad-wayed.
For now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus' palace-hall
No longer at variance are, for bowed are the hearts of them all
By the prayers of Hêrê, and woes to the Trojans from Zeus shall befall.
Thou lay up my words in thine heart, and forget not in any wise
In the hour when the honey-dew of slumber shall melt from thine eyes."
So spake that phantom, and passed, and the king was left alone;
And his heart swelled high with the hope of the deeds that should never be done.
For he deemed he should win the city of Priam that selfsame day:
Ah fool!—for he knew not the doom in the heart of Zeus that lay.
For yet would Allfather mete forth death-groan and agony-pain
To the Trojan and Danaan folk in the battle's desperate strain.

And he started from sleep, and still rang round him the voice divine;
And he rose and sat, and he donned his tunic fair and fine,
New-woven, and then with his cloak's broad folds did he wrap him around,
And under his glistening feet his beautiful sandals he bound;
And about his shoulder he flung his silver-studded brand,
And he grasped his father's sceptre, the incorruptible wand;
And he passed to the brazen-harnessed Achaians' ships on the strand.
Now the Goddess, the Dawn, drew nigh unto far Olympus' height,
Proclaiming to Zeus and the rest of the Deathless her tidings of light.
Then the king commanded the clear-voiced heralds his hest to bear,
And to cry to the folkmote-stead the Achaians with long-flowing hair:
So they made proclamation, and swiftly the people assembled there.
But first hath he gathered a council of chieftains mighty-souled
By the ship of the Pylos-begotten king, even Nestor the old.
So when these were set, he unfolded his counsel dark and deep:
"Hear, friends, there hath come unto me a vision from heaven in my sleep,
In the balmy night, most like unto Nestor the godlike king
In goodlihead seemed it, and stature, and outward fashioning.
And he bowed down over mine head, and he uttered forth his rede:
'Thou sleeping, O son of Atreus the war-wise lord of the steed!
It beseems not a counsel-chief through the livelong night to slumber,
Unto whom be committed the folk, and searchings of heart without number.
But now give heed to me straightway: from Zeus am I sent unto thee,
Who careth for thee with exceeding compassion, afar though he be.
He bids thee that all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed

By their thousands ; for now shalt thou win the Trojans' town broad-wayed.
For now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus' palace-hall
No longer at variance are, for bowed are the hearts of them all
By the prayers of Hêrê, and woes to the Trojans from Zeus shall befall.
Thou lay up my words in thine heart.' So spake he, and vanished was he,
Fleeting away ; and sleep's sweet fetters slid from me.
Come then, if so be we may harness Aṣhaia's sons for the fight.
But first with my words will I make assay, as is meet and right.
I will give them counsel to flee in the many-benched galleys away ;
But speak ye to this man and that, and by words constrain them to stay."
So spake he, and sat him down, and before that hero-band
Rose Nestor the king of Pylos, the city beside the sand ;
And amidst of the warrior-ring with kindly words he spoke :
" Friends, lords of the Argive cities, and chiefs of battle-folk,
If from any Achaian beside this dream-told rede had come,
We had deemed it a lying vision, and drawn back far therefrom.
But he that beheld it is greatest of all the Achaian array.
Come then, if so be we may marshal Achaia's sons for the fray."
So spake he, and back from the council of princes he led the way.
And the sceptre-swaying kings to the shepherd of folk gave ear :
And they rose and followed, and swiftly the throng of the folk drew near.
As forth the countless-thronging tribes of the brown bees pour,
From the cleft of a rock fast streaming and streaming evermore,
Clustering, rising, and wheeling around the flowers of spring,
Here are they, there are they, murmuring myriads hovering ;

So came they, many a nation, forth from the ships and the camp,
In front of the sandy beach, with multitudinous tramp,
To the folkmote-stead ; and speeding them on like a spreading flame
Went Rumour amongst them, the herald of Zeus, and thronging they came.
Stirred they and tossed as the waves of the sea, and beneath them the ground
Rang as they sat them adown : through the whirling storm of sound
Nine heralds were shouting to hush them, to still their clamourings,
And to cause them to hearken the voice of the heaven-fostered kings.
But at last were the war-folk set, and were stayed in their places, and quelled
Was the storm of their babble, and Lord Agamemnon arose, and he held
The sceptre by toil of Hephaestus fashioned in days long gone.
The God-smith gave that staff unto King Zeus, Kronos' son ;
Zeus gave it to Hermes the Guide-god, the Argus-slayer's meed ;
King Hermes gave it to Pelops, the goader of the steed ;
And Pelops gave it thereafter to Atreus, shepherd of folk,
Who left it in death to Thyestes, the lord of many a flock :
And thereafter Thyestes left it to Agamemnon's hand
To stretch it o'er many an isle, and o'er all the Argive land.
Leaning thereon, his rede to the Argive array spake he :
" Friends, Danaan heroes, henchmen of Arês, give ear unto me.
Zeus hath bound me in fetters of folly heavy and sore,—
Ah ruthless, who promised, and sealed that promise heretofore, [rest!
That I yet should smite strong Troy, and should win to my home and my
Woe's me for the counsel of bane and deceit, for now is his hest
That to Argos I get me with shame, since for me much people have died.

Yet I ween 'tis the pleasure of Zeus the All-mighty that this should betide,
Who hath brought low many a stately city's crown of pride,
And yet shall bring, for his might is greater than all beside.
Oh this were a mock for the yet unborn to hear, I wis,
That Achaia's array should be warring in vain in such fashion as this,
So goodly a host and so mighty, and all these years should have fought
With men that be fewer than they, and as yet the end is not!
For if now the Achaians and Trojans would bind them by troth-plight oath
For a space to abide in peace, and we took the tale of both,
And hearthman by hearthman were reckoned all the Trojan men,
But we, the Achaians, were told by companies of ten,
And for each band chose one Trojan, our cups at the feast to fill,
Many a banqueting ten should be lacking its cupbearer still:
So many more, I say, be the sons of Achaia than they,
Than the Trojans, the dwellers in Troy; but a mighty spear-array
From many a city is there, for Ilium's battle-stay.
And all these utterly thwart me, and baffle the eager-souled
From smiting the city of Troy, the goodly-builded hold.
For lo, by this nine years of Zeus most high have rolled,
And the planks of the galleys have rotted, unravelled the tacklings are;
And our wives, I ween, and our helpless babes be sitting afar
In our halls, and ever they look for our coming, and still our hand
Hath found not the end of our toil, for the which we sought this land.
Go to now, as I shall give counsel, so let us all obey:
Let us flee with the ships to our dear-loved fatherland far away;

For never, I ween, shall we win broad-wayed Troy-town for a prey."

So spake he, and leapt the hearts in the breasts of them all at the word,
Even all the Achaians of whom his counsel had not been heard.
And stirred was the host like the long sea-rollers forward-sweeping
On the Icarian sea, which the East-wind or South-wind, leaping
Forth of Allfather's caverns of cloud, hath uplifted on high.
And as over a cornfield the whirlwind feet of the West-wind fly,
And rank after rank of the ears boweth down as the blast goeth by,
So was the folkmote stirred; and the stormy-clamouring crowd
Rushed to the galleys: from under their feet rose the dust in a cloud,
And hung overhead in the still air: each unto other they cried
To lay hand to the galleys and drag them adown to the vast sea-tide.
The keel-trenches now are they clearing; a cry reacheth heaven from the lips
That are thirsting for home, and they pluck the props from beneath the ships.
And the Argives' home-return had been ere the fated day,
But that Hêrê turned to Athênê, and eagerly thus did she say:

"Out on it, child of the Aegis-lord, O tireless of toil!
Lo how aback to their homes, to their own dear fatherland-soil,
Over the broad sea-ridges shall flee the Argive host;
And for Priam and Troy-town's folk shall they leave behind them a boast,
Even Helen the Argive queen, for whose sake died in the war
Many Achaians by Troy, from their fatherland home afar!
Nay, get thee down to Achaia's brazen-harnessed array,
And with winsome words of thy mouth each man of the folk do thou stay,
And withhold them from running the shapely galleys asea through the spray."

So spake she; the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed hearkened her rede.
From the crests of Olympus she darted, and came with eager speed
Unto where the Achaian ships fleet-faring lay by the sea.
And Odysseus, the peer of Zeus in counsel, there found she
Standing, but never he touched his fair-benched ship's dark side,
For over his heart and his spirit was rolling the anguish-tide.
And hard by his side stood Athênê the grey-eyed, and uttered her rede:
"O seed of Zeus and Laertes, Odysseus shiftful at need,
What, thus will ye fling you aboard of the many-benched galleys to flee
Hence to your homes and your dear-loved fatherland over the sea?
And for Priam and Troy-town's folk shall ye leave behind you a boast,
Even Helen the Argive, for whom there died of Achaia's host
In Troyland many a man, from their fatherland far away!
Nay, pass thou now through the folk, thou shalt not stint nor stay,
But with winsome words restrain each man of Achaia's array,
And withhold them from running the shapely galleys asea through the spray."
Straightway the hero knew that voice as the Goddess spoke,
And he hasted and ran: from his shoulders he cast aside his cloak;
And his henchman the Ithacan herald Eurybates caught the same.
But to Atreus' son Agamemnon the hero swiftly came,
And received his father's sceptre, the incorruptible wand;
And he hied him therewith to the brass-clad Achaians' ships on the strand.
Unto whatso king he came, or chieftain of battle-might,
With winsome words he pleaded, and strove to stay his flight:—
"Good friend, it beseemeth thee not as a dastard to shrink from the fray!

Nay, but abide thou here, and cause thy folk to stay.
For the mind of Atreus' son not yet dost thou understand:
He trieth us now, but soon shall the coward feel his hand.
Lo, the rede that he spake in the council was nowise heard of us all.
Have a care lest bane from his wrath on the sons of Achaia fall!
The heart of a king Zeus-fostered is surely a mighty thing;
And of Zeus is his honour, and loveth him Zeus the Counsel-king."
But whomso he found loud-shouting, a wight of the common folk,
Him with the sceptre he smote, and with sharp stern words he spoke:
"Good fellow, sit thou still, and give ear unto other men now,
Who are mightier than thou: a battle-blencher and weakling art thou.
None taketh account of thee in the war or the council-ring.
It may nowise be that every Achaian shall here be king.
Ill is the lordship of many, let one lord still bear sway,
One king, unto whom dark-counselling Kronos' son for aye
Hath given the sceptre and laws, that the rest of the folk may obey."
So in masterful wise did he marshal the host, and they sped once more
To the folkmote-stead from the ships and the tents with loud uproar,
Even as when the surge of the seething sea falls dashing
On a league-long strand with the roar of the rollers thunderous-crashing.
So the rest of the folk sat down, and each in his place was stayed;
But Thersites alone with endless words yet babbled and brayed.
Never his heart lacked speech for his foul imaginings,
For vain and unseemly wrangling, and speaking evil of kings,
Even whatso he deemed should awaken the laugh and the scorner's glee:

And of all that to Ilium came the most ill-favoured was he.
Bowed were his legs, and the one foot lame ; on his shoulders he bare
A hump, and a narrow chest was the narrow spirit's lair ;
High-peaked was the crown of his head, overstraggled with starveling hair.
To Achilles and hero Odysseus most hateful he was above all,
For that ever against them he prated. Now 'gan this knave to brawl,
Shrill-screaming against Agamemnon the godlike : but they that heard
Were exceeding wroth with the railer, and indignation-stirred,
While against Agamemnon he shouted, and cried a shameless word :
"Atreides, what lackest thou more, and for what wouldst thou still upbraid?
Filled be thy tents with brass, and many a chosen maid
Is therein ; for Achaia's sons give ever the best of the spoil
First unto thee, when a city is won by our battle-toil.
Or what, art thou hungry for gold, for the price that some one shall bring,
Some steed-quelling Trojan from Troy, for a dear son's ransoming,
The battle-thrall of mine or another Achaian's sword,
Or a woman lovely and young—for the lust of the king our lord !
Yea, for thee to possess alone !—foul shame it is, I trow,
That a chieftain should bring the sons of Achaia to naught but woe.
O weaklings and bywords ! Achaian women !—men no more !
Home with our ships let us get us, and here on the Trojan shore
Let us leave him to gloat on his guerdons, until he be certified
Whether we be his shield and defenders or not in the perilous tide,—
He who now to Achilles, a hero better than he by far,
Hath done dishonour, hath torn from his hands his guerdon of war.

Ha, fury is not in Achilles, the wrong, he regardeth it not;
Else had the last of thine outrages now, O Atreides, been wrought!"
So cried he on Agamemnon the shepherd of folk in his spite:
But strode Odysseus the godlike up unto him forthright,
And grim was his look and stern was his voice as he chode with the wight:
"Thersites, thou railer, how shrill soever of tongue thou be,
Refrain thee, think not to wrangle with kings is for such as thee;
For, I tell thee, no viler caitiff than thou shall be found in the host,
Of all that with Atreus' sons have come to Troyland coast.
Then let not thy malapert tongue with the names of princes play,
Neither cast thou reproaches, nor watch for the home-returning day.
For how these deeds shall befall not yet do we soothly know,
Whether Achaia's sons shall return in weal or woe.
Yet thou must be sitting reviling the king, even Atreus' son,
Agamemnon the shepherd of folk, for the rich gifts battle-won
That the Danaan heroes give, and with gibes thou pratest on.
But I tell thee—and surely fulfilled shall it be, this thing that I say—
If I find thee mouthing thy madness again, as it is this day,
Then may the head of Odysseus no more on his shoulders remain,
Never let me be called among men Telemachus' father again,
If I take not thee, and strip each rag of thy raiment away,
Thy mantle, thy tunic that veileth thy shame from the sight of day,
And drive thee howling hence to the sea-swift ships by the wave,
Scourged from the folkmote-stead with the shameful stripes of the slave."
So spake he, and laid on his back and his shoulders blow upon blow

With his sceptre : he writhed and he cowered, and fast did the hot tears flow ;
Upstarting across his back did the blood-weal lividly glow
At the stroke of the sceptre of gold : there sat he in pain and in fear
With witless-wildered look, and he wiped away the tear.
And the folk, howsoever they chafed, laughed on him in gleesome mood,
And thus cried one, as he looked on his fellow thereby that stood :
" Lo how Odysseus hath fashioned full many a glorious deed
In arraying the host for the battle, in uttering war-wise rede !
But this is the best of all he hath wrought in the Argive host,
He hath smitten the railer dumb, he hath quelled the braggart's boast.
Ha ha ! no more shall the knave of his malapert spirit be stirred
To lift up his voice against kingfolk with babble of mocking word."
So murmured the folk : but Odysseus hath risen sceptre in hand,
Strong smiter of towns : by his side did Athênê the grey-eyed stand
In the shape of a herald, and cried to the people to hush them to hear,
To the end that the sons of Achaia, the thousands far and near,
Might hearken his word, and ponder his counsel with diligent heed.
And with kindly intent he uplifted his voice, and he uttered his rede :
" Atreides, to-day the Achaians be minded to do a thing
That shall make thee utterly vile in all men's eyes, O king.
Yea, they be false to the promise they gave unto thee in the day
When hither from Argos the horse-fed land they were sailing away,
That they would not return till low fair Ilium's ramparts lay.
For even as young babes wail, or as widowed women cry,
Faint-hearted they moan to their fellows, and ' Home,' say they, ' let us fly ! '

Good sooth, we have hardship enow heart-broken to flee from the war:
For the shipman that bideth for one month's space from his wife afar
Doth chafe by the side of his long ship, wearying sore to be free,
Whose jailers be blasts of the storm and the waves of the tossing sea:
But for us, as the ninth year rolleth around, by the Troyland coast
Still are we biding. I think not scorn of Achaia's host [shame
That they chafe by the beak-prowed galleys;—but what, were it not foul
To have tarried so long, and to go empty-handed as erst we came?
O friends, be strong to endure, and a little while abide
Till we know whether truly or not seer Kalchas prophesied.
For we know this well in our hearts, ye are witnesses all this day,
Whomsoever the fates of death not yet have borne away,
How the ships on a long-ago yesterday gathered by Aulis' strand
Freighted with vengeance for Priam, and woe for the Trojans' land,
And around the spring at the altars we gathered for sacrifice,
And up to the Deathless Ones did the smoke of the hecatomb rise
'Neath a beautiful plane whence the sunlight-flashing water was flowing:
Then a great sign came, a serpent with fire-litten scales red-glowing,
A terrible thing, which himself the Olympian sent into light:
From under the altar he darted, and flashed to the plane forthright.
Now therein was the brood of a sparrow, and helpless fledglings were they,
Nestling under the leaves at the uttermost end of a spray,
Eight, and the mother the ninth, those little ones that bore.
And the serpent in pitiful wise devoured them shrieking sore.
And wailing around her beloved the mother was fluttering;

But he writhed himself up as she screamed around, and he caught her wing.
But when he had eaten them, mother and fledglings, before our eyes,
By the God who had sent him forth was he changed in wondrous wise.
For the son of Kronos the Hider of Counsel turned him to stone:
And all we stood and marvelled, beholding the thing that was done,
How the Gods' dread portents came in the midst of the hecatomb.
Forthright spake Kalchas the seer, and he uttered the word of doom:
'Achaians with long-flowing hair, why stand ye in silence by?
'Tis the Counsel-father hath sent us this mighty sign from on high,
Late, yea, and of late fulfilment, but never the glory shall die.
As yonder serpent hath torn them, mother and young, from the nest, [breast,
Even eight, and the mother the ninth, which had warmed them to life with her
So many years shall we wear overseas in battle-toil;
At the last in the tenth shall we win that broad-wayed burg for a spoil.'
So spake the seer, and behold, the fulfilment is on us this day.
O battle-harnessed Achaians, endure to the end to stay
Here, till the mighty city of Priam be won for a prey!"
Then a cry brake forth from the Argives; the galleys rang again
On the right and the left with the terrible thunder of shouting men,
Crying yea to the rede of Odysseus the godlike, the island-king.
Then Nestor, Gerenia's horseman, spake to the warrior-ring:
"O shame! how like unto children ye babble with empty words,
Like prattling babes that have naught to do with the strife of the swords!
What of our covenant-plight?—of our oaths?—ay, let them depart; [340
To the fire, to the fire with them all, deep counsels and searchings of heart,

The libations of wine unmingled, the hand-troth trusted of yore!
For idly we wrangle as boys, and for this may we find no more
Any healing or help, after all these years on the alien shore.
Now nay, be thy counsel unshaken as ever, Atreides, to-day;
Have lordship over the Argive host in the desperate fray.
But for them—let them fret out their hearts, the one or two, whose rede
Is not as the rede of the Argives; behold they shall not speed,
Who bid us fare back unto Argos, or ever the Aegis-lord
Have shown us the end of his promise, if faithful or false be his word.
For I say that to seal it the brow of Almighty Kronion was bent
In the day that the Argives boarded the sea-swift galleys, and went
Oversea, heavy-freighted with slaughter and doom for the sons of Troy;
For his lightning flashed forth on our right for a sign and a token of joy.
Wherefore let none make haste to return back home from the strife
Ere each man have lain by the side of a widowed Trojan wife,
And avenged the afflictions of Helen, the sighing captive's pain.
But and if for the home-returning any be furious-fain,
Let him lay but his hand to the black-hulled fair-benched galley, that so
Before all others to doom and the blackness of death he may go.
But in wisdom advise thee, O king, and give ear to our counsel, I pray:
No witless word shall be mine, to be lightly cast away.
By tribes and by clans, Agamemnon, divide thou the folk for the fray,
That tribe may be helper of tribe, and clan clan's battle-stay.
And if thou shalt do this thing, and the folk shall obey thy behest,
Thou shalt know what chieftain is dastard, what nation faileth the rest,

And who be the valiant;—for each in his place shall be marshalled aright;—
And shalt know if by doom of the Gods Troy-town boweth not to thy might,
Or by reason of hearts that be faint, and of hands that be skilless of fight."
Answered and spake unto him Agamemnon, the war-folk's king:
" Sooth, father, the best of Achaians art thou in the council-ring.
Ah Zeus Allfather, Athênê, Apollo, fain would I be
Had Achaia but ten such counsel-fellows to stand by me!
The city of Priam the king full soon should stoop her neck
Under our hands, overmastered and wasted in ruin and wreck.
But Kronion the Aegis-tosser with troubles hath darkened my life,
Casting me into the midst of profitless wrangle and strife.
For Achilles and I fell out, and we strove for a maiden's sake
With words of contention: yet I was the first into wrath that brake.
But if ever in counsel and heart we be set at one again,
No respite shall Troy have then, be it never so little, from bane.
Now get you hence; take meat, to the end we may forth to the fight.
Keen-whetted be every spear, and be each shield ready-dight:
Let each man heedfully fodder his fleetfoot chariot-steeds:
Let each look well to the wheels of his car for the battle's needs,
That in bitter strife he may grapple the livelong day with the foe.
No respite, though never so little, the battle-strain shall know
Or ever the fury of men by the coming of night shall be stilled.
On many a breast shall the belt of the warrior-warding shield
Be drenched with sweat, and the hand shall cleave to the weary spear,
And many a horse shall sweat as he strains in the chariot-gear.

But and if I shall spy any dastard that fain would be stealing away
From the battle to bide by the ships—ha, then shall he vainly essay
To escape from the dogs that shall tear him, the red beaks rending the prey!"
Then shouted the Argives aloud, with a sound as of breakers that roar
When the South-wind hurleth the waves on the cliffs of an ironbound shore,
When the crags of the headland are lashed evermore by the surge mad-leaping
'Neath the scourge of the winds as from this side and that side their wings come sweeping.
Upstarting they scattered and sped to the galleys with hurrying feet,
And they lighted them fires mid the tents of their camp, and they took their meat.
And to this one and that of the Gods everlasting they sacrificed there,
Praying to 'scape from the fight, from the War-god's murder-snare.
But the King of Men Agamemnon offered in sacrifice
A goodly five-year steer unto Zeus high-throned in the skies.
And he summoned the chiefs of the nations Achaian in council to meet,
Nestor, chiefest of all, and Idomeneus lord of Crete:
Therewithal the Aiantes twain and Tydeus' son drew near,
And the sixth with these was Odysseus, Zeus's counsel-peer.
But unbidden the mighty-voiced Menelaus came with the rest;
For the load of his brother's care lay heavy upon his breast.
And they stood round the beast, and they sprinkled the barley-grains on its head;
And Lord Agamemnon prayed in the midst of the kings, and he said:
"Zeus, cloudrack-veiled, sky-throned in thy glory and might above all,
May the sun not sink in the sea, nor the folds of the darkness fall,
Till I dash to the ground the palace of Priam in smoke and flame,
And consume with ravening fire the stately doors of the same,

And shiver the breastplate of Hector, and cleave through the heart of my foe
With the brass, till warriors many, about their chief laid low,
Rolled in the dust shall have bit the earth in their agony-throe."
So spake he, howbeit Kronion not yet would fulfil his request:
He accepted the gifts, but he multiplied toil unto him, and unrest.
Then after the prayer they sprinkled the barley-grains unbrayed, [flayed.
And they drew back the necks of the beasts, and they severed the throats, and
And the bones of the thighs they cut out, and, doubly folding it over,
With the fat they wrapped them about, and with pieces of flesh did they cover.
On the altar they laid them, and blazed the leafless billets beneath;
And the inwards they spitted, and broiled in the Fire-god's fervent breath.
And after the sacrifice, and the tasting of entrails due,
The rest into pieces they sliced, and they ran the long spits through, [drew.
And they heedfully roasted the same, and the roast from the flames they with-
So when they had ceased from their toil, and the banquet was all prepared,
They feasted, and none lacked aught of the banquet equal-shared.
And so soon as the craving for meat and for drink had been done away,
Gerenia's horseman, Nestor the old, to the rest 'gan say:
"Far-famous Atreus' son Agamemnon the war-folk's king,
No more let us linger in talk, let us make no tarrying
In the work which the Gods have given to our very hands this day.
Go to, let the heralds cry to Achaia's mailèd array,
And let them gather the folk from the camp of the ships on the strand;
And we through the host of Achaia will pass, a chieftain-band [440
That the battle-mood sooner may wake, and the War-god's flame be fanned."

And the saying pleased Agamemnon, the lord of a warrior folk.
To the heralds with voice clear-pealing his hest forthright he spoke
To call to the battle-toil the Achaians with long-flowing hair.
And they made proclamation, and swiftly the war-folk gathered there.
And the heaven-fostered kings by the son of Atreus' side
Sped swiftly arraying the host, and Athênê the flashing-eyed
Was there with her glorious immortal Aegis that waxeth not old;
Danced they and streamed on the wind, its hundred tassels of gold,
All lovely-twisted, and each was the worth of a hundred kine:
Flashing it sped she adown the Achaian battle-line,
And ever she spurred them on, and she filled each heart with might,
And she made them fain of the onset, afire for the stintless fight.
And suddenly fairer and sweeter the battle-play seemed unto these
Than to flee in the hollow ships to their fatherland far overseas.
As flameth a ravening fire through a forest measureless-wide
On a mountain-ridge, and the glare of it lightens on every side,
So the unearthly sheen of the brass as the host swept on
Flashed far through the welkin, and up to the heaven of heavens it shone.
And from them—as the myriad tribes of the flying fowl of the air,
The armies of geese, of the cranes, of the long-necked swans snow-fair,
In an Asian mead by Caÿster's waters softly-fleeting
Hitherward hover and thither with triumphing wings glad-beating,
As with clangour and clashing they settle; the whole mead ringeth again;
So from the tents and the galleys came nation on nation of men
Pouring forth to the plain of Scamander, and ever the deep earth under

With the tramp of the ranks and the stamping of steeds rang terrible thunder.
In the mead of Scamander they halted, the green mead starred with flowers,
Countless as leaves or as blossoms that wake under springtide showers.
Even as the multitudinous flies in swarms untold,
That are wheeling and dancing in Spring evermore round byre and fold,
When the milk in the pail foams up, and the bubbles are bright at the brim,
So swarmed in the plain the Achaian long-haired warriors grim
Furious-fain to be rending the Trojans limb from limb.
And lightly as herdmen sever their goats by drove and drove,
When mingle the wide-scattered flocks through the pastures afar as they rove,
So the war-chiefs marshalled the people, and ranged them to march to the fray;
And Lord Agamemnon towered in the midst of them all that day,
Like Zeus the thunder-triumphant in eyes and in head was he,
And as Arês' his loins were, his breast as Poseidon's, the Lord of the Sea.
And even as a bull doth in goodlihead all the herd outshine,
Forasmuch as he standeth fair to be seen mid the gathered kine,
Even so did Zeus that day make Atreides the hero-king
Peerless mid thousands, and chief in the chieftains' gathering.
Tell to me, Muses now, in Olympian halls that abide—
Ye are Goddesses, ye stand by and behold whatsoe'er doth betide,
But we know certainly naught, we have heard but a rumour of words—
Tell who were the chiefs of the Danaan war, and their battle-lords.
But the host of them ne'er could I name, nor the tale of their battle-line,
Nay, not though I had ten tongues, not though ten mouths were mine,
And an adamant voice, and within me a heart of brazen thews;



Save and except the Olympian Muses, the daughters of Zeus
The Aegis-wielder, would count up all unto Troy that came.
Howbeit the chieftains of galleys, and all their ships, will I name.
 Lords of Boeotia's host came Lêitus, Peneleôs,
Prothoênor and Arkesilaus and Klonius for battle uprose,
With the folk that in Hyriê dwelt, and by Aulis's crag-fringed steep,
And in Schoinus and Skôlus, and midst Eteônus' hill-clefts deep,
In Thespeia and Graia, and green Mykalessus the land smooth-meadowed,
And in Harma and Eilesius, and Erythrae the mountain-shadowed,
And they that in Eleon abode, and in Hylê and Peteon withal,
And in Okaleê and in Medeon, burg of the stately wall,
In Kopae, Eutresis, mid Thisbê's cushat-haunted trees,
Koroneia that looks on the mere, Haliartus' deep-grassed leas,
And they that abode in Plateia, in Glisas under the steep,
And they of Thebae the Lesser, the goodly-builded keep,
Of Onchestus the hallowed, the glorious grove of the great Sea-father,
Of Mideia, and they that in Arnê the wealth of her vintage gather,
Of Nisa's shrine, and Anthêdon the uttermost burg of the land:
Of these sailed fifty keels overseas from Boeotia's strand,
And each good ship with a hundred and fifty warriors manned.
 Came they of Asplêdon, and Minyan Orchomenus' valiant ones;
Askalaphus led them to war, with Ialmenus, Arês' sons,
Which were born of a maiden tender-sweet, Astyochê, daughter
Of Aktor, Azeus' son, for the mighty War-god sought her;
And she went up into her bower, and in secret he couched by her side.

And with these went thirty marshalled galleys over the tide.
And the Phocians with Schedius came, and Epistrophus led them on,
The children of Iphitus, mighty-hearted Naubolus' son,
The abiders in Kyparissus and Pytho with crags girt round,
And they that in Panopeus, Daulis, and Krisa the holy were found,
Hyampolis' folk, and they that in Anemôria abode,
And they that dwelt where Kephisus the sacred river flowed,
And the men of Lilaia beside Kephisus' fountain-head :
So in Phocia's gathering two score black-hulled galleys sped.
And their captains ordered the battle, and marshalled the mountaineers,
And set their host in array on the left of Boeotia's spears.
And the Locrians' chieftain was Aias, Oïleus' fleetfoot son,
No giant, as Telamonian Aias the mighty one ;
But little of stature he was, and in corslet of linen was clad ;
Yet in all that host no peer in the javelin-cast he had.
And of Kynus, and Opus, and Kalliarus his war-fellows were,
And of Bêssa and Skarphê, Augeia withal, the passing-fair,
And of Tarphê, and Thronius that standeth Boagrius' waters beside.
So forty ships of the Locrians after their hero hied,
Of the folk that look o'er to Euboea across the strait sea-tide.
And the men of Euboea, the fierce Abantes, there were mustered,
Of Kalchis, Eretria withal, Histiaia with vines heavy-clustered,
From Kerinthus hard by the sea, and from Dion that crowneth the steep,
And Karystus' folk, and the warders of Styra's castled keep.
From Euboea with Arês' scion Chalkôdon's son, they departed,

Elephênor, the chief of the host of Abantes, the mighty-hearted,
Whom the fleetfoot Abantes followed with stormy hair back-streaming,
Spearmen furious-fain with their lances deadly-gleaming
To smite and to rend the harness that warded the foeman's breast.
And after the War-god's child two score black galleys pressed.
And there were the warders of Athens the fair-built burg of war,
The land of Erechtheus the mighty-hearted, the man that of yore
Zeus' daughter Athênê fostered: of corn-giver Earth was he sprung;
And in Athens she set him on high, in her temple treasure-hung.
And still as the years roll round do the high-born sons of the land
With bulls and with lambs at the Earth-born hero's altar stand.
And the captain that led them to war was Menestheus, Peteôs' son;
Amid all the earth-abiders like unto him was there none
In setting the steeds and the shielded heroes in battle-array,
Save Nestor alone, for that older he was, and in wars grown grey.
And with him sped fifty black ships over the printless way.
And from Salamis Aias led twelve longships over the flood,
And arrayed them for fight in the place where the ranks of Athens stood.
Came the dwellers in Argos and Tiryns, the giant-fencèd keep,
Of Hermionê and of Asinê built by the sea-gulf deep,
And of Troezen and Êtonê, Epidaurus fair with the vine,
And the folk of Aegina and Mases, Achaians of high-born line,
And these Diomedes the mighty-voiced led forth to the war
With Sthenelus, well-loved son of Kapaneus famous of yore.
And with these Euryalus fared, that godlike-goodly one,

The hero-child of the king Mekistes, Talaon's son.
Diomedes the mighty-voiced to the war led forth all these,
And in fourscore black-hulled ships was the host of them borne overseas.
Came they of Mycenae the stately, the city of giant wall,
Of Corinth the wealthy, and beautiful-builded Kleônae withal,
And the folk of Orneia, Araithyriae the lovely-fair,
And of Sikyon, wherein at the first his sceptre Adrastus bare;
Hyperêsia's men, Gonoessa's sons came down from her height
Pellênê's warders, and Aigion's heroes for battle dight,
And from all the stretch of the Seaboard, from Helikê spreading far:
And theirs were a hundred galleys, and he that led them to war
Was Atreus' son Agamemnon: the most and the mightiest came
After him, and himself was arrayed in the splendour of brazen flame.
Battle-triumphant and peerless mid all the heroes he stood,
For that noblest he was, and he brought most war-fellows over the flood.
They of mountain-pent Lacedaemon's ravine-land there were arrayed,
Of Pharis, and Sparta, and Messê's cushat-haunted shade,
Of Bryseia, and they that tilled Augeia's goodly land,
And the men of Amyklae and Helos, the town on the hoarse sea-strand,
And of Laas, and Oitylus' folk that abide 'twixt mountain and shore,
And the mighty-voiced Menelaus led them in ships threescore,
Agamemnon's brother, howbeit his people were marshalled apart,
And amidst them himself went, strong in the fierce desire of his heart,
Cheering them on to the fight, and his soul was exceeding fain
To avenge the afflictions of Helen, the sighing captive's pain.

Came the dwellers in Pylos, and pleasant Arênê's battle-throng,
And from Thryon the ford of Alpheius, and Aipy's battlements strong,
And they that from Kyparissêis and Amphigeneia wended,
From Pteleon, Helos, and Dorion, where the Muses contended
With Thamyris, Thracia's bard, and hushed his song for aye,
When he came from Eurytus lord of Oichalia far away.
In the pride of his heart had he vaunted that his should be victory-fame,
Though the Muses, the daughters of Zeus, to match them against him came.
In their anger they took from him sight and the song that theretofore
Was unearthly-sweet, and they made him forget his harper's lore.
And Nestor, Gerenia's horseman, led that warrior-aid,
And fourscore galleys and ten with the war-wise king were arrayed.
Came Arcadia's folk from the shadow of steep Kyllênê's height
By Aipytus' tomb, the highlanders fain of the grapple of fight,
They that in Pheneon abode and Orchomenus wealthy with sheep,
From Stratiê, Rhipae, they came, from Enispê's storm-swept steep,
From Tegea, the tillers of fair Mantineia's pleasant land,
Stymphêlus' warders stout, and Parrhasia's warrior-band.
With Lord Agapênor, the son of Ankaios, over the foam
Went threescore galleys, and each stout keel from their highland home
Bare many Arcadian warriors cunning in battle-lore,
For that Atreus' son Agamemnon himself had given good store
Of his fair-benched galleys to speed them over the wine-dark sea,
For not for the mountain-folk was the sea-waves' mastery.
Buprasion and Elis the hallowed sent many a battlement-warder

From the west, where standeth Hyrminê, and Myrsinus keepeth the border,
Even to the east, where Olenus' rock and Aleision stand.
Four were their princes: with each stout hero from Elis-land
Went ten swift galleys with hosts of Achaians battle-fain.
Sped Thalpius there with Amphimachus, these led squadrons twain;
Of Eurytus sprung and of Kteatus, Aktor's seed were they.
Amarynkeus' scion Diores was chief of the third array.
Polyxeinus the godlike, the son of the king Agasthenes,
Which was son of Augeius, led onward the fourth host overseas.
From Dulichion they came, from the sacred Echinad isles, to the war,
The folk that look over the narrow seas unto Elis' shore.
And the chieftain of these was Meges, the War-god's battle-peer,
Whose father was Phyleus the chariot-fighter to Zeus most dear,
Who gat him of old to Dulichion wroth with a sire forsworn,
And in fourscore galleys his folk o'er the broad sea-ridges were borne.
Odysseus led forth Kephallenia's hero-hearted array;
In Ithaca's isle, under Nêritus' forest-clad heights, dwelt they,
And on lone Krokyleia, and Aigilips' rugged crags and bare,
And there were the men of Zakynthus, the dwellers in Samos were there,
And the folk that overagainst them abode on the mainland coast.
And Odysseus the counsel-peer of Zeus led forth that host:
Twelve crimson prows with the hero the gulf of the waters crossed.
Thoas the son of Andraimon was chief of Aetolia's band,
In Pylênê and Olenus dwelt they, by Pleuron 'twixt mountain and strand,
Mid Kalydon's world of stone, and on Chalkis' wave-lashed shore.



For the sons of Oineus the hero were found with the living no more;
Gone was the mightiest of all, bright-haired Meleager was dead,
Over all the Aetolian folk of yore was he captain and head.
So fourscore galleys with Thoas over the waters sped.
Lord of the Cretan folk was Idomeneus spear-renowned,
Of the men that in Knossus abode, and in Gortys the rampart-crowned,
Lyktus, Miletus, Lykastus whose white walls glisten afar,
Phaistus and Rhytion withal, the fair-built burgs of war,
And other of them that in Crete the hundred-citied were found;
And their captain to lead them to war was Idomeneus spear-renowned,
With the battle-peer of the manslaying War-god, Meriones.
So with them went fourscore black-hulled galleys over the seas.
And Tlepolemus, valiant and stalwart scion of Herakles' line,
Came leading the stately Rhodian men in longships nine,
War-fellows gathered from Rhodes, from the nation divided in three,
From Iêlysus, Lindus, Kameirus with white walls fair to see.
Tlepolemus spear-renowned was captain and chief over these,
Whom Astyocheia bare to the might of Herakles.
From the river Sellêis he brought her a captive from Ephyrê-land,
When many a city of men Zeus-fostered was spoiled by his hand.
But scarce was Tlepolemus grown unto man in the halls fair-built,
When the blood of his father's uncle unwares by his hand was spilt,
The blood of the scion of Arês, Likymnius old and grey.
Then the manslayer builded him ships, and he gathered a great array,
And he fled overseas from the threats of the kin of the blood that was shed,

The sons and the grandsons of Herakles, hero-sire of the dead.
So he came unto Rhodes, through homeless affliction and toil as he roved :
And the folk were divided in three by their tribes, a nation beloved
Of Zeus who outstretcheth o'er godfolk and men his sceptred hand ;
And riches unearthly-great did Kronion shower on the land.

Three shapely-fashioned galleys from Symê did Nireus bring,
Nireus, the son of Aglaia and Charopus, bright-faced king,
Nireus, the comeliest man of all that to Ilium's strand,
Save only Peleides the peerless, came from the Danaans' land ;
Howbeit a weakling he was, and but few were his battle-band.

From Nisyrus, from Karpathus came they, came Kasus' warriors tall,
From Eurypylus' city of Kos, from the isles of Kalydnae withal.
Pheidippus and Antiphus were the battle-captains of these,
Sons of the isle-king Thessalus, scion of Herakles,
And with them were thirty galleys arrayed to pass the seas.

Now telleth the song of Pelasgian Argos' battle-host
Who in Alopê dwelt, and in Alus, in Trachis, the rock-rimmed coast,
And in Phthia and Hellas, the land of lovely bride and dame,—
Men called them Achaians ; Hellênes and Myrmidons had they to name ;—
And fifty galleys of these with Achilles their captain came.
But they knew not the shout of the onset now, nor the roar of the fray,
Because there was no man to lead them, to set their ranks in array,
For that fleetfoot Achilles the godlike amidst of his galleys lay,
Wroth for the sake of Brisêis, the beautiful-tressèd maid ;
Whom he won in the spoils of Lyrnessus by toil of a perilous raid,

When he wasted Lyrnessus' burg, and the towers of Thêbê town,
And Mynes he smote and Epistrophus, mighty in spear-renown,
The sons of Evênus the child of Selêpius king of men.
For her bitter-hearted he lieth, but soon shall he rise again.
Came they that in Phylakê dwelt, and in Pyrasus flower-bestarred,
The holy place of Demeter and Iton's sheep-fed sward,
And Antron hoarse with the sea, and Pteleon's deep-grassed mead,
Spearmen that Protesilaus the hero wont to lead
While yet he was living: but now in the dark earth's lap was he pent,
And his wife in a desolate home, with cheeks for mourning rent,
Was in Phylakê left, for slain was her lord by a Dardan hand
As first of the host of Achaians he leapt from his ship to the strand.
Howbeit not lordless his men were, though sorely they longed for the dead,
But Podarkes, the child of the War-god, their ranks to the battle led,
Son of the Phylakid Iphiklus, master of many a fold;
Blood-brother was he of Protesilaus the hero-souled:
But the younger was this, and mightier far was the elder-born,
Protesilaus the hero: yet not left chief-forlorn
Were his people, albeit they longed for their mighty-one passing sore,
And over the waters with him had there sped black hulls twoscore.
Came they that in Pherae abode, Boibêis' mere beside,
In Glaphyrê, Boibê, and stately Iolcos' towers of pride.
Eleven were their ships: by the son of Admêtus marshalled they were,
Eumêlus, the child that a lady divine to Admêtus bare,
Alcestis, peerless amidst king Pelias' daughters fair.

Came they in Methonê that dwelt, and that guarded Thaumakia's keep,
And that kept Meliboia's walls, and Olizon's craggy steep.
Philoktêtes was captain of these, the warrior bow-renowned :
Seven were their galleys, and oarsmen in each good ship were there found
Fifty, cunning of hand to deal with the bow in the fray.
But their king in a lonely isle in bitter torment lay ;
For in Lemnos the hallowed they left him, Achaia's war-bound men,
Anguish-racked by the wound of the deadly snake of the fen.
There in his pain doth he lie ; but the sea-borne host of war
Ere long unto Philoktêtes shall turn in their need once more.
Not lordless his men were, albeit they longed for their mighty one,
But Medon arrayed them for battle, Oïleus' bastard son,
Whom the grim burg-waster begat, whom Rhênê the fair slave bore.
Came the dwellers in Trikkê, Ithomê the land of crumbling loam,
And they of Oichalia, Eurytus' warrior-warded home ;
And Asklêpius' children twain led these to the grapple of fight,
Podaleirius cunning to heal, and Machaon the leech of might,
And by them were there thirty galleys in ranks of battle dight.
Came Ormenia's folk, and the dwellers by Hypereia's spring,
From Asterion they came, and from Titanus' white crests mustering ;
Eurypylus led them to battle, Evaimon's glorious son,
And fourscore dark-hulled ships to the war-land followed him on.
And there were Argissa's warders, Gyrtonê's fighters withal,
From Elonê and Orthê they came, and from white Oloösson's wall.
Polypoites the battle-bider was captain of their array,

Son of Peirithous scion of Zeus that abideth for aye ;—
Of Hippodameia the Queen was he born to the Centaurs' Bane
In the day when his vengeance was wrought on the monsters shaggy of mane,
When he drave them from Pelion afar unto where the Aithikans abode :—
Not alone, for Leonteus was with him, the seed of the Battle-god
Born unto Kaineus' scion Koronus the lordly-hearted ;
And with these black ships fourscore from the land of their fathers departed.
Came galleys twenty and two with Guneus from Kyphus-land,
By battle-biding Peraibans and Eniênians manned,
The folk in Dodona that dwelt mid the wintry storm and the cloud,
And they that by sweet Titaresius the goodly acres ploughed,
The flood that giveth his fair-flowing streams to Peneius the river ;
Yet not with Peneius the silver-swirling mingle they ever,
But over the face of his waters they glide as oil outshed,
For the outflow he is of the Styx, the flood of the Oath most dread.
And Prothous son of Tenthrêdon was lord of Magnesia's array :
Round Peneius and Pelion's tossing billows of green dwelt they.
Prothous fleet of foot was the captain that marshalled these,
And fourscore black-hulled galleys followed him far overseas.
Lo, these were the captains and lords of the Danaan battle-throng.
And who was the mightiest of all, thou tell me, Goddess of Song,
Of the men and the steeds that followed the sons of Atreus to war ?
The horses of Pheres' son were the goodliest ones by far,
The beasts that Eumêlus drave, fleet-flying as birds of the air ;
Matched in the hue of their coats and in age and in height they were.

These in Pereia were reared by Apollo the Silver-bowed ;
Mares were they both, and upon them the terror of battle rode.
Of the heroes the mightiest man was Aias, Telamon's son—
While lasted the wrath of Achilles, for like unto him was there none,
Neither any such steeds as the peerless Peleides' battleward-bearers.
But he the while in the midst of his galleys, the beaked sea-farers,
Lay nursing his wrath against King Agamemnon, shepherd of folk,
Atreus' son : and his men on the strand where the white waves broke
Were hurling the quoits for their sport, and the spears of the woodland war,
And they shot with the bow : and the steeds, each one by his several car,
Champing the lotus-stalk and the marish-parsley's leaf,
Stood ; but the cunningly-fashioned chariots of many a chief
Lay in their tents : for the battle-fain captain of old yearned they,
And they roamed up and down through the camp, but not for them was the fray.
Onward the war-host rolled, and the land seemed all on fire,
And the earth groaned under their tramp, as it groans 'neath the Thunderer's ire
When the ground that encompasseth Typhon is scourged by his levin-flail,
In the Ariman's land, where lieth the giant, as telleth the tale.
So under the tread of their feet the earth's heart groaned again
As onward they came, and swiftly sped they over the plain.
To the Troyfolk a messenger, Iris fleet as the storm-wind, sped ;
From Zeus, from the Lord of the Aegis, she came with tidings of dread.
To a folkmote the people were come at the gates of Priam the King ;
All, young men and old, were there at the mighty gathering.
And the fleet-footed Iris drew near, and she stood mid the people and spake,—



And the voice of Polites the son of the ancient king did she take,
Who was sitting, the watchman of Troy, by his fleetness of foot made bold,
On the crest of the barrow of Aisuêtes the war-chief old,
Ever watching to spy the Achaians bursting forth from the ships:—
So Iris the fleetfoot cried, but it seemed that his were the lips:
"Dear to thee yet, old sire, is the aimless-wavering word,
Even as in peace-time; but war, the unswerving and stern, is upstirred.
Oft have I stood with the host when the heroes for battle were met,
But such gallant array, but so countless a throng, I beheld never yet.
For unnumbered as leaves of the forest, untold as the sands of the shore,
Citywards over the plain all afire for the battle they pour.
Hector!—of all men I charge thee chiefly; hearken and do:
For thou hast in the city of Priam war-helpers from far not a few.
Wide spread over earth be the nations, and diverse speech have they:
Let them speak each prince to the folk whereover he beareth sway,
And lead them forth of the city, and set them in battle-array."
So cried she, and Hector was ware that a Goddess spake that rede, [speed.
And he brake off the folkmote, and they for their battle-gear hied them with
And wide were the gates all flung, and forth did the war-folk pour,
Footmen and horsemen, with clashing and tramping and mighty uproar.
Now a steep-upspringing hill in front of the city doth stand,
A lone height looking afar over miles of the low-lying land;
And by menfolk 'tis called Batieia, the high knoll thorn-overstrayed,
By the Deathless the tomb of Myrinê, the fleetfoot Amazon maid:
There nation by nation they marshalled them, Troy and her warrior-aid.

Chief of the Trojans was Flashing-helm Hector, the mighty in war,
Offspring of Priam; his men were the most and the bravest by far
That arrayed them in harness of fight, with the fury of spears aflame.
Lord of the Dardans Aeneas the son of Anchises came.
At his getting a mortal was bridegroom, divine Aphroditê the bride.
Mid the spurs of Mount Ida in twilight of green had she stoln to his side.
Not alone went the hero forth, for Antenor's war-wise sons,
Akamas and Archilochus, went with him, battle-mighty ones.
And there were the wealthy folk in Zeleia-town that abode,
Where dark in the shadow of Ida the stream of Aisêpus flowed,
Trojans, 'twas Pandarus led them, Lykaon's glorious heir;
And the gift of Apollo himself was the bow in his hands that he bare.
From Adresteia they came, from Apaisus' battle-keep,
Pityeia's warders, and they of Tereia's mountain-steep.
With Adrestus they went, and Amphius, the corslet of linen who wore,
Children of Merops, the seer of Perkotê: in prophecy-lore
Was he wisest of men, and he would not his sons should fare to the fray,
To the battle, destroyer of heroes; howbeit they would not obey
Their father's behest, for the fates of black death drew them away.
And there were the ranks of Perkotê, and Praktius' valiant ones,
The men of Abydos and Sestos, and hallowed Arisbê's sons.
Asius, Hyrtakus' son, was the captain that led them to war;
Asius, Hyrtakus' son: from Arisbê swept with his car
Great horses with coats like flame, from the stream of Sellêis afar.
And Hippothous led to the war the Pelasgian spearmen stout,

Even they that abode in Larissa with fat lands compassed about.
With him and Pylaius, the War-god's child, went forth their array,
The sons of Pelasgian Lethus, Teutamus' son, were they. [brave,
And the Thracians with Akamas came, and with Peirous stalwart and
The tribes that be sundered from Troyland by Hellespont's rushing wave.
The Kikonians' spear-array unto Troy did Euphêmus bring,
Son of the fostered of Zeus, even Keades, Troezen's king.
And there was Pyraichmes, leading Paeonia's deep-arched bows
From far-off Amydon town, where Axius' broad stream flows,
The river whose waters be fairest of all on the earth outspread.
Pylaimenes' lion-heart the Paphlagonians led
From the Henetans' land, where roameth the wild mule fierce and free,
The warders that kept Kytôrus, the tillers of Sesamus' lea,
And the folk by the river Parthenius dwelling in goodly halls,
In Kromnê and Aigialus, and high Erythinê's walls.
Halizonians by Odius led and Epistrophus came to the war,
From the birth-bed of silver, the land where Alybê standeth afar.
With Chromis came bird-seer Ennomus, captain of Mysia's troop,
Yet not by the lore of the birds did he save him from black death's swoop,
But low was he laid by the hands of Aeacus' fleetfoot son
In the river, wherein he slaughtered Trojans many an one.
And the Phrygians by Phorkys were led and Askanius, godlike wight,
From afar, from Askania's ramparts, afire for the joy of the fight.
The Maeonians with Mesthles and Antiphus stood in their battle-gear;
They twain were Talaimenes' sons, and their mother Gygaiê the mere.

From the shadow of Tmolus their war-fellows came to the doom of the spear.
Came the Carians with Nastes, the nation that babble an uncouth tongue;
In Miletus abode they, and Phtheiron's mountain-forests among;
By the streams of Maeander they dwelt, and by Mykalê's beetling crest,
And with Nastes arrayed and Amphimachus on to the battle they pressed,—
Amphimachus, Nastes withal, meet son of Nomion's pride;
For bedizened with gold, like a girl, to the battle of heroes he hied.
Fool!—little its splendour availed him in bitter destruction's day,
When slain by the hands of Aeacus' fleetfoot son he lay
In the river, and war-wise Achilles bare that gold away.
And the Lycians arrayed with Sarpedon and Glaukus the princely stood;
From Lycia they came, from afar, and from swirling Simoïs' flood.

BOOK III.

Of the duel between Paris and Menelaus.

SO when these with their chieftains had marshalled them, nation by nation, for fight,
With clamour the Trojans pressed onward, and outcry, as birds in their flight,
When afar through the heaven cometh pealing before them the cry of the cranes,
As they flee from the wintertide storms and the measureless-deluging rains.
Onward with screaming they fly to the streams of the ocean-flood,
Bringing down on the folk of the Pigmies battle and murder and blood,[beneath.
And death-challenge they hurl through the mist of the morn on the foemen
But silently marched the Achaians, breathing the battle-mood's breath,
Steadfastly minded to stand by their war-fellows unto the death.

As a mist overstreameth the hill-crests, brought by the south-wind's might,—
To the shepherds an evil thing, for the robber better than night,—
And no farther than flieth a stone from a man's hand pierceth the sight;
Even such was the dust-cloud that rose from their feet, and it hung overhead
As Troyward they came, and swiftly over the plain they sped.

Now when host drew nigh unto host, as onward the war-waves flowed,

Forth as the champion of Troy Alexander the godlike strode,
With a panther's hide on his shoulders, a bow, and a battle-brand,
While shivered and shook two brass-headed spears in the grip of his hand ;
And he cried upon all the mightiest men of the Argive array
To fight with him man against man in the terrible battle-play.
But him Menelaus the hero, the Arês-beloved, hath espied
Stepping forward in front of the warrior-throng with long proud stride ;
And as joyeth a lion to light on the carcass of some huge beast,
When he findeth an antlered stag or a wild goat slain for his feast,
For in frenzy of famine he rendeth the quarry, though never so fain [ta'en ;
Would the swift hounds chase him away, and the hunters whose prey he hath
So joyed Menelaus to see Alexander the godlike appear,
And his eyes laughed over the traitor ; he deemed his revenge was near.
Down from his chariot he leapt to the ground in his battle-gear. [behold

Then saw him the man that had wronged him, who nowise had looked to
That face in the forefront of fight, and his spirit was stricken acold,
And backward he shrank from the death to the fence of the shields of his men.
And as when one spieth a serpent in treading a mountain-glen,
And backward he leapeth, while tremble his limbs with a sickness of dread,
And he turneth to flee, with the face of his horror as wan as the dead ;
So into the throng of the Trojans stately-charioted
Quailing from Atreus' son Alexander the godlike fled.

And Hector looked down on him there, and he chode with words of scorn :
" False Paris ! O face without peer, heart woman-mad, faith-forlorn ! [40
Would thou hadst never been wedded—ay, would thou hadst never been born!

Yea, even of that were I fain, and more were our gain therein,
Than that thou shouldst be thus our reproach and the scorn of all thy kin!
Ha, but the long-haired Achaians will laugh in their triumph-glee,
Crying, 'This is the chief of the champions of Troy!'—for that goodly to see
Is thy body, but manhood or might is there none in the heart of thee.
Was he like unto thee, the man in the sea-swift galleys that hied
Over the broad surf-ridges with comrades true and tried,
And was guest of the strangers, and stole him a fair wife out of their land,
From afar, a daughter of spearmen mighty of heart and hand,
For a bitter grief to thy father, thy city, and all thy race,
And to them that hate us a joy, and to thee confusion of face?
And wilt thou not bide Menelaus the Arês-beloved?—not thou!
Thou wouldst know what a warrior is this whose wife thou hast gotten now.
Small help shouldst thou have of thy lyre and the gifts Aphroditê bestowed,
Thy curls and thy comeliness, when low in the dust thou wert bowed.
Ha, but the Trojans be downtrodden cravens, or long agone
A garment of stone hadst thou donned for the evils thy lust hath done."

Answered and spake unto him Alexander the godlike wight:
"Hector, true be thy words, and thy chiding is meet and right.
But thine heart never failed thee: 'tis keen evermore as the hard-edged bill
That cleaveth a beam in the hands of the man that with craftsman-skill
Shapeth him planks for a galley; the sharp edge doubleth his might;
Even so in thy breast is a dauntless soul ever keen for the fight.
Yet taunt not me with the bounty of Aphroditê the Golden;
We may scorn not the glorious gifts in the hands of the Deathless enfolden

For whomso they will, but for none to attain where the Gods have withholden.
But now if thou wilt that I fight for the meed of war-renown,
Bid the rest of the sons of Troy and Achaia sit them down ;
And set in the midst Menelaus the Arês-beloved and me,
To do battle for Helen's sake, and the treasure that came oversea.
And it shall be, that whoso prevaileth, and proveth him stronger in strife,
He shall take her, and all that treasure, and homeward shall lead her, his wife.
And the nations shall plight them with oaths, and shall learn lovingkindness
And in Troyland in peace shall ye dwell, and they shall return full fain [again,
To Achaia the land of the lovely, to Argos the horse-fed plain."

So spake he, and Hector rejoiced at the word with exceeding joy :
Forth to the midst hath he strode, and he stayeth the ranks of Troy,
Outstretching his spear, and they all sat down with one consent.
But the long-haired men of Achaia their bows against him bent,
Drawing the shafts to the head, and the stones 'gan whirl in the sling.
Then afar down the lines did the voice of king Agamemnon ring :
"Argives, refrain you !—Achaians, cast nor stone nor spear !
For that Hector Lightning-helm hath a word for the kings to hear."

So spake he, and they from the battle refrained them, the war-shout died
Suddenly down, and Hector stood in the midst and cried :
" Hear me, ye Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian foes :
Thus saith Alexander, for whose sake first this feud arose :—
He biddeth the rest of the Trojans and all the Achaian array
On the bosom of All-mother earth their weapons of war to lay ;
And here in the midst Menelaus the Arês-beloved and he

Shall battle for Helen's sake and the treasure that came oversea.
And it shall be, that whoso prevaileth and getteth the mastery,
He shall take her, and all that treasure, and homeward shall lead her, his wife:
And with oath-plight and glad lovingkindness will all we rest from strife."

Then stayed was the rush of the onset, and hushed was the many-voiced
And thus did the battle-helper, the lord Menelaus, begin : [din ; 95

"Hearken ye also to me, for that mine is the heart whereon
Hath fallen the bitterest anguish :—I trow ye shall soon be at one,
Argives and Trojans, ye that have suffered woes on woes
In my quarrel, the feud that first from the prince Alexander arose. 100
And for whichsoever the doom of death by the Fates is dight,
Let him die ; but ye which remain shall be set at one forthright.
Now bring for us lambs ; one white, of the males, one black, of the ewes,
For the Earth and the Sun, and a third will we bring for Father Zeus.
And bring for us Priam your king, that himself may plight the oath, 105
Even he and none other ; o'erweening his sons be, and faithless of troth ;
That none by high-handed transgression the oath of Allfather may mar ;
For vain and unstable of purpose the hearts of the young men are.
But the old man cometh between, and forward and backward are cast
His eyes, that with these and with those it may all go well at the last." 110

Then glad were Achaian and Trojan to hear that challenge cried,
For they trusted that now should they rest from the woeful warfare-tide.
So they halted the steeds in the ranks, and down from the cars stepped they,
And they doffed their armour, and cast on the ground their war-array,
Full nigh, that scant was the space 'twixt host and host that lay. 115

And Hèctor sent unto Troytown heralds twain, to bring
The lambs with speed, and to call to the sacrifice Priam the king.
And the lord Agamemnon hastened the herald Talthybius' feet,
Bidding him bring the lambs from the hollow ships of the fleet;
So to lord Agamemnon the godlike he rendered obedience meet.

And to Helen the ivory-wristed is Iris the messenger gone
In the shape of her husband's sister, the wife of Antenor's son;
The wife of the lord Helikaon, Antenor's son, was she,
The fairest of Priam's daughters, the lady Laodikê.
In her bower did she find her weaving a web full high and wide;
Twofold was the pall of Queen Helen, and gleamed on its purple pride
Many battles of horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaian bands,
Toils they endured for her sake at the War-god's pitiless hands.
And Iris the swift-footed spake, as she glided to Helen's side:
"Hither away, thou shalt look upon gallant deeds, dear bride,
Deeds by the horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaians wrought,
They that in days overpast in woeful warfare fought
In the plain, with the lust of the battle, the man-destroyer, filled:
But now are they sitting in silence, the din of the onset is stilled;
On their shields are they leaning, and stand beside them their lances tall.
And Paris and Arês-beloved Menelaus amidst of them all
With the spears long-shafted shall battle for thee, even thee, this day.
And the hero that overcometh shall call thee his wife for aye."

So speaking the Goddess thrilled her with yearning sweet and strong
For the husband of old, for the city and parents forsaken long.

Straightway the silvery-shining folds of her veil did she don,
And she passed from her bower, the while the tears in her soft eyes shone ;
Not alone, there were handmaids twain that moved by Helen's side,
Aithrê the daughter of Pittheus, and Klymenê lovely-eyed.
And straightway they came to the place where rose the Scaean gate:
There Priam the ancient king with Thymoites and Panthous sate,
Lampus and Klytius withal, Hiketaon the War-god's seed,
Antenor the wise, and Ukalegon mighty in council-rede.
There at the Skaian gate were the people's elders set,
Eld-wasted in war-might, but wisdom in counsel abode with them yet.
And the sound of their piping voices was like the cicala's cry
As it rings out shrill through the wood from the tree where she sitteth on high.
So there upon Troytown's tower-sat grey-haired prince and peer:
And they lifted their eyes, and beheld Queen Helen drawing anear ;
And each unto other the light-winged words full softly spoke:
" No marvel that Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian folk
Long time should have borne tribulation for such a woman as this.
How wondrous like to a deathless Goddess in face she is !
Howbeit, though never so lovely she be, in the ships let her go,
Neither leave unto us and our children a heritage of woe."
So spake they, but Priam uplifted his voice, and to Helen he cried :
" Hither come to the front, dear child, sit down by the old man's side,
And so shalt thou look on thine husband of old, on thy friends, and thy kin,
—Nay, nay, 'tis the Gods have done it: not thine I account the sin:
For they brought up against me Achaia, the war and the tears and the grief,—

And shalt tell me of yonder captain, and name that battle-chief,
That hero amidst the Achaians stalwart and great to see.
Good sooth, there be others that tower by the whole head taller than he:
But so goodly a man mine eyes looked never upon ere now,
Neither any so worship-worthy: he seemeth a king, I trow."
And Helen the woman divine made answer to him, and she said:
"Honoured art thou in mine eyes, dear sire of my lord, and dread:—
Ah had I chosen but death, yea, an evil death, in the hour
When I followed thy son, and forsook mine acquaintance, my bridal bower,
And my daughter, my best-beloved, and the sweet girls, playmates mine!
Woe's me! it was not to be: and for this do I weep and pine.
But this will I tell thee whereof thou enquirest and askest of me:
Atreus' son Agamemnon the wide-dominioned is he,
A noble king, and withal a spearman battle-keen,
And was brother to shameless me—yea, this strange thing hath been!"
And the old man gazed, and he marvelled, and brake forth there into praise:
"O happy Atreides, fair-fated! O blest in the lot of thy days!
What hosts of the sons of Achaia be bowed beneath thine hand!
Time was when I went into Phrygia the vine-abounding land;
There saw I the Phrygians, the horsemen swift-darting as birds on the wing,
Warrior-thousands of Otreus and Mygdon the godlike king.
Far down by Sangarius' waters the tents of their host were arrayed.
I also was numbered amongst them, I and my warrior-aid,
In the day of the Amazon terror, when came the maids of war:
Yet fewer were these than the flashing-eyed sons of Achaia are."

Then the old king looked on Odysseus, and once again asked he :
" Yet tell me withal, dear child, who yonder chief shall be.
By the head is he lesser of stature than Atreus' kingly son.
But in shoulders and chest, I trow, is he broader to look upon.
His harness of battle is laid upon earth's all-fostering floor,
But himself like a lord of the flock goeth ranging the war-ranks o'er.
Yea, he seemeth to me as a ram wool-wealthy, the stately beast
That paceth amidst of the ewes of the great flock silver-fleeced."

And Helen to him made answer, the daughter of Zeus spake on :
" Lo, this is Odysseus the mighty in counsel, Laertes' son,
Who was nurtured in Ithaca's land, mid the crags of a rugged isle,
Cunning in dark devices, a weaver of webs of guile."

And Antenor the hoary-wise made answer thereunto :
" Yea, princess, surely the word thou hast spoken is utter-true ;
For Odysseus the godlike came hitherward once on a time oversea,
And stout Menelaus withal, on an ambassage touching thee.
And I welcomed them into mine halls, and I gave them the guest-fare due,
And I marked their bodily presence, the thoughts of their hearts I knew.
Now when these twain stood with the Trojans that into the folkmote pressed,
The shoulders of lord Menelaus towered above the rest ;
But when they had sat them down was Odysseus the kingliest.
When the weaving of word-weft began, and they uttered their rede to our folk,
With a rush as of feet in the race came the words Menelaus spoke.
Little he said, but his voice rang clear, for he multiplied not [shot.
His words, though the younger he was, neither wide of the mark were they

But when came the time for Odysseus the manifold-counselled to rise,
He stood with his face bowed down, and earthward he bent his eyes ; [sight,
And he waved not his sceptre to rearward, he stretched it not forth in our
But moveless it drooped in his hands,—thou hadst deemed him a witless wight:
Thou hadst said ' He is anger-sullen, he troweth nothing aright.'
But so soon as the sound of his mighty voice from his deep chest rose,
And the storm of his fast-coming words like the drift of the wintertide snows,
Then no man might strive with Odysseus in counsel-rivalry,
And we marvelled no more at his glory, nor counted him poor to see."

Then of Aias the old king asked, as he marked him afar from the wall:
" And who shall be yonder Achaian, the hero stately and tall
Who towers by shoulders and head above the Argives all?"

Spake Helen the royally-robed, the goddess-woman, again :
" Aias the giant is this, war-fence of Achaian men.
Beyond, mid his Cretan array, as a god doth Idomeneus stand,
And around him be gathered the chiefs of his Cretan battle-band.
Him did the War-god's friend Menelaus ofttimes greet
As a guest in our halls, what time soever he came from Crete.
Now the rest of the hawk-eyed sons of Achaia, I see them all,
Their faces are unforgotten, their names can I well recall.
But two arrayers of warfolk mine eyes have nowise found,
Castor the queller of steeds, Polydeukês the fist-renowned.
Mine own blood-brethren they are, one mother bare them with me.
Is it so, that from dear Lacedaemon they came not with these oversea,
Or that in sooth in the sea-tracking galleys they hitherward came,

But stand not amidst of the war-press of heroes for very shame,
For dread of the scoffs and the manifold mocks at a sister's name?"
As she spake, in the strait embraces of Earth all-mother they lay,
In their own dear fatherland soil, Lacedaemon far away.
Through the town with the Gods' oath-victims then did the heralds fare;
Two lambs, and the fruit of the earth, heart-gladdening wine, they bare
In a goat-skin vessel, and passed the herald Idaius on;
In his hands the burnished bowl and the golden chalices shone.
And he hasted the ancient king, and to Priam thus spake he:
"Son of Laomedon, rise; the princes are calling for thee:
Horse-quelling Trojans and mailèd Achaians are tarrying there
Till thou come down into the plain the covenant-oaths to swear.
For thy son Alexander and Arês-beloved Menelaus in strife
Shall close with the spears long-shafted to win Queen Helen to wife.
And whoso prevaileth, the bride shall be his, and the treasure-store;
And the nations shall plight them with oaths, and in friendship be joined once more,
And in Troyland in peace shall we dwell, and they shall return full fain
To Achaia the land of the lovely, to Argos the horse-fed plain."
Then the old king shuddered, howbeit he spake to his henchman-band
To yoke the steeds to the car, and they swiftly obeyed his command.
Then he gat him up into the wain, and the reins in his hands he caught,
And beside him Antenor mounted the chariot beautiful-wrought.
And the steeds through the Skaian gateway down to the plain drove they.
And it was so, that when they were come unto Troy's and Achaia's array,
They lighted down from the chariot on earth's all-bounteous face,

And on to the midst of the host of Achaia and Troy did they pace.
Straightway uprose to his feet Agamemnon King of Men:
Rose Odysseus the manifold-counselled: the lordly heralds then
Mingled the wine in the bowl, to the altar the victims they led,
And over the hands of the kings the lustral-water they shed.
And his dagger the son of Atreus drew with his brawny hand,
The blade that hung evermore by the sheath of his battle-brand.
And he severed the locks from the heads of the lambs, and the heralds bare,
Mid Trojan chiefs and Achaian parting the sacred hair.
And amidst them Atreides uplifted his hands, and in prayer did he cry:
"Zeus, Father, who dwellest in Ida, most glorious and most high,
Thou Sun, who beholdest all things, and hear'st whatsoever is said,
And ye Rivers, and Earth, and ye in the underworld of the dead
Who punish the toil-fordone that have sworn and have broken their oath,
Be witnesses ye, and the warders of this our covenant-troth.
If so be Alexander the Trojan shall slay Menelaus in fight,
Let him have Helen, let all that treasure be his of right.
And we in our sea-tracking galleys again will homeward go.
But and if bright-haired Menelaus shall lay Alexander low,
The Trojans shall yield up Helen and all that wealth straightway,
And a recompense to the Argives, such as is meet, shall they pay,
Even such as shall still be accepted by them of the unborn day.
But if by Priam and Priam's children the victory-right
Be denied unto me when the prince Alexander hath fallen in fight,
Then will I battle to get me requital for this their sin,

Tarrying here, until to the end of my warfare I win."

So spake he, and severed the throats of the lambs with the pitiless brass,
And he laid them down on the ground, and forth did the life-tide pass
As they quivered and gasped, for the brass had reft their strength away:
And into the chalices out of the bowl the wine poured they:
And they put up their prayer to the Gods that in life everlasting abide.
And thus from the midst of Achaians and Trojans a deep voice cried:

"O Zeus most glorious and mighty, ye Deathless, defend the right!
Which nation soever shall first transgress this covenant-plight,
Be the brains of them spilt on the earth as yonder wine this day,
Even theirs and their children's, their wives be made the ravisher's prey!"

So prayed they; howbeit Kronion would not yet bring it about.
And amidst of the war-host Priam Dardanus' son spake out:

"Hearken, ye Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian men:
As for me, I will turn back now unto Ilium the windy again,
Forasmuch as I may not endure with mine eyes to behold this sight,
My dear son grappling with Arês-beloved Menelaus in fight.
Ah, Zeus and the rest of the Deathless know, and none beside,
Unto which of the twain the death-doom end is decreed to betide."

So spake he, and laid on the chariot the lambs that Atreides slew;
Then mounted the godlike man, and the reins through his fingers he drew.
And Antenor sat by his side in the beautiful-fashioned wain;
And back from the host to the ramparts of Ilium rode these twain.

But Hector the son of Priam and godlike Odysseus straight
Paced out the ground for the duel, and measured the lists of fate.

Then laid they the lots in a helmet of brass, and they shook them, to know
Which warrior first should hurl with his brass-headed lance at the foe.
And the multitude prayed, and uplifted their hands to the Gods on high:
And thus from the midst of Achaians and Trojans did voices cry:
"Zeus Father most glorious and mighty, O hearken from Ida thy throne!
Whichsoever of these 'twixt nation and nation this mischief hath sown,
Vouchsafe that he perish and pass unto Hades' halls of night,
But for us may there be lovingkindness and faithful covenant-plight."
Great Hector the splendour-helmed now shaketh the morion about,
Looking backward, and suddenly leapeth the token of Paris thereout.
Then row upon row the folk sit down where the pawing steeds
Stand chafing, and earth is agleam with the sheen of battle-weeds.
Thereafter in fair bright harness of fight his shoulders dressed
Alexander the godlike, the lord of Helen the lovely-tressed.
First unto his legs did he lay the greaves fair-glittering,
Clasping the ankle around with the burnished silver ring.
Thereafter about his bosom the fence of the corslet he dight,
His brother Lykaon's, howbeit it fitted his body aright.
And the belt of his brazen war-glaive silver-bestarred he flung
Over his shoulder, his broad stout buckler thereafter he slung.
On his goodly head his well-wrought helmet he settleth now:
Terribly nodded the mane of the crest overglooming his brow.
Firm in his hand like the grasp of a friend is the mighty spear.
Menelaus the dauntless withal hath arrayed him in battle-gear.
So when they had girt on their harness amidst of their folk, straightway

They strode forth into the midst 'twixt Troy's and Achaia's array
With terribly-glaring eyes, and amazement seized each one,
Both horse-quelling Trojans and mailèd Achaians that looked thereon.
Now in the measured lists stand wronger and wronged full nigh:
Quiver the spears in their hands as the battle-wrath flames high.
First flew Alexander's lance long-shafted across the field;
And it smote on the round fair-shapen of lord Menelaus' shield.
Bent was the point of it backward; it might not prevail to burst
Through the stubborn fence of the targe: then sprang forth vengeance-athirst
Menelaus Atreides, and cried unto Zeus Allfather first:
"King Zeus, vouchsafe me to punish the man that hath worked me woe:
Beneath mine hand do thou lay Alexander the traitor low,
That all men may tremble, yea, such as are yet to be born, to requite
The guest-receiver with wrong, and to do lovingkindness despite."
Then he swung up his lance long-shafted, and hurled it across the field;
And it smote on the fair-fashioned round of the son of Priam's shield.
Crashed through the glittering buckler the great spear's thunderbolt-head,
And it stayed not, but on through the curious work of the corslet it sped.
Through his tunic it shore; by his flank cold-sliding it went full nigh
To the life, but he swerved aside, and the black death passed him by.
Then his battle-brand drew Menelaus, bestarred with the silver white,
And he smote on the crest of his helmet, but shivered to left and to right
Clashing and clanging afar from his hand did the shards of it fly.
And Atreides looked up to the heavens, and he cried with a bitter cry:
"O Zeus Allfather, none else of the Gods is so cruel as thou!

I deemed I had gotten revenge for my foe's foul wrong but now. [shot
But behold, in my grasp is my battle-brand shivered: my lance hath been
Forth of mine hand on a bootless flight; it hath slain him not!"
Then he sprang on him, seizing the horse-mane over his crest thick-tossed,
And wrenching him round 'gan hale him away to Achaia's host.
And the broidered strap strained hard at his throat, that he gasped for breath,
Even the helmet-clasp that was buckled his chin beneath.
And now had he dragged him a captive, and won unmeasured renown,
But the daughter of Zeus, Aphroditê, with eager glance looked down;
And she snapped in his bitter need that stubborn bull's hide band,
And the helmet sprang from his head in Atreides' brawny hand.
But with one swift turn of his wrist the hero hath hurled it aside
To Achaia's array, to the hands of his comrades true and tried.
Then he turned him, and leapt on his enemy, furious-fain to slay
With the brazen spear—but lo, Aphroditê snatched him away
With the effortless strength of a Goddess, and veiled him in viewless air;
And cradled in cloud to the cedar and scent of his bower she bare.
And she hied her to bring thither Helen: she found that lady bright
Amidst of a throng of the daughters of Troy on the gate-tower's height.
And the princess's nectar-breathing robe with her hand she shook;
But or ever she spake the form of an ancient woman she took,
A distaff-handmaid;—in Sparta before that shame befell
Fair fleeces she spun for her lady, and loved her passing well.
So seemed Aphroditê the Goddess, and softly murmured she:
"Hither away to thine home: Alexander calleth for thee.

In the bridal chamber he is, on the wondrous-carven bed,
In splendour of beautiful raiment, in glory of goodlihead.
Thou wouldst say he was nowise returned from deadly strife with a foe, [ago."
But was bound for the dance, or had ceased from the dance but a moment
Thrilled by her voice was the soul of the lady, and Helen turned,
And the neck exceeding fair of a Goddess her eyes discerned,
And the bosom of all desire, and the deep love-lightening eyes;
And astonied was Helen the Queen, and she spake in indignant wise:
"O tyrant, why must thine enchantments be dragging me ever down!
What, wilt thou hale me thy captive again unto some fair town,
Some city in Phrygia-land or Maeonia's lovely lea,
If perchance there too thou hast found thee a minion that waiteth for me!
Since now Menelaus hath vanquished the prince Alexander in strife,
And looketh to lead me home, the false, the hateful wife.
For this cause comest thou hither, O treacherous-hearted, now?
Nay, go thou, sit by his side, and forsake the heaven-path thou,
And never again turn back with thy feet to Olympus' steep,
But pour out thine heart upon him, and thy darling in love-ward keep,
Till he stoop to thee, call thee his wife, or in scorn look down on his thrall!
But I, I will not go—indignant were all men if this should befall—
To be handmaid unto his couch: they will all cry shame upon me,
The daughters of Troy:—yea, now is mine heart all misery."
Then in wrath Aphroditê made answer, and thus did the Goddess say:
"Provoke me no more, rash fool, lest in anger I cast thee away,
And according to this my love be the measure of that mine hate,

And I load thee with loathing of nation and nation, a bitter weight,
Of Trojans and Danaans: then shalt thou die by an evil fate!"
So spake she: at that stern threat did Helen the Zeus-born quail.
Silently veiled she her face with her silver-shimmering veil,
And she followed the Goddess, and none of the daughters of Troy was ware.
So they came unto Prince Alexander's palace exceeding fair.
To the toils of the spindle and loom her handmaids turned them in haste;
But she, the lady divine, to her high-ceiled chamber paced.
And for her Aphroditê the laughter-winsome a high-seat bare,
And overagainst Alexander the Goddess set that chair.
Thereon sat Helen the child of Zeus the Aegis-lord;
But she turned her eyes away with a bitter-scornful word:
"Thou hast come from the battle!—O better it were if therein thou hadst died
Overborne by the hero that took me in days overpast for his bride.
Ha! thou wert wont to boast that by might of thine hands and thy spear
Thou wert stronger than Prince Menelaus whom Arês holdeth dear!
Go then—ay, go and defy Menelaus again to the fray:
Man against man bid the Arês-belovèd to meet thee!—nay,
I bid thee forbear, even I, for I would not have thee dare
To the deadly strife of the battle the prince of the golden hair,
Lest haply he smite thee to death, lest his spear overmaster thee there."
And Paris with soft words answered and spake unto Helen the Queen:
"Ah lady, upbraid not: thy scorn on mine heart smiteth heavy and keen.
Menelaus hath gotten the victory now through Athênê's aid;
Howbeit my day shall come, for with us too Gods be arrayed.

—Nay come, let us couch us for love's delight, even I and thou ;
For never the net of desire so tangled my soul as now ;
No, not when from fair Lacedaemon at first I snatched thee away,
And afar in the sea-swift galleys bare that loveliest prey,
And in Kranaê's isle we embraced, and heart into heart beat fire,
It was not with the love of to-day, with the rapture of this my desire."
He spake, and prevailed, and she followed as on to the couch he led ;
So these twain laid them adown on the curious-carven bed.
But Atreides ranged through the press like a wild beast to and fro,
If so be he might anywhere spy Alexander the godlike, his foe.
Yet could no man of Troy, no man of her war-aid battle-renowned,
Show Arês-beloved Menelaus where might Alexander be found.
Yet not as for love that they bare had they hidden him, whoso had seen,
For hated he was of them all with the hate of death, I ween.
Then cried in the midst of the war-hosts King Agamemnon, and said :
" Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans, and ye of their warrior-aid !
With Arês-beloved Menelaus abideth the victory.
Yield Helen the Argive then, and the treasure that came oversea.
And a recompense unto the wronged, even such as is meet, shall ye pay,
Such as still shall be good in the eyes of the men of an unborn day."
So spake Atreides, and shouted thereto the Achaian array.



BOOK IV.

How the Covenant was disannulled by the arrow of treachery, and the war-hosts closed in battle.

BUT the Gods were gathered the while with Zeus on the golden floor,
And they sat at the feast; in their midst did the Lady Hêbê pour
The rose-flushed nectar-wine, and out of the goblets of gold
To each other they drank, looking down on the Trojans' battle-hold.
Straightway Kronion began with word-shafts glancing aslant
To provoke Queen Hêrê to wrath, making mock with a heart-stinging taunt:
"Of the Goddesses champions twain for the lord Menelaus there be,
Hêrê of Argos, Athênê withal of Alalkomenê.
But lo, from his trouble afar are they sitting: their eyes have seen,
Yet they revel at ease, the while Aphroditê the Laughter-queen
Ever goeth beside her friend, that the doom-stroke come not nigh;
Yea, now hath she snatched him away from the death that he looked to die.
Howbeit in fight Menelaus hath conquered, the War-god's friend:
Then take we counsel together how all these things shall end.
Once more to the bane of the battle, the horror of onset-yell,

Shall we rouse them, or rain lovingkindness adown, that in peace they may dwell?
Now if this were well-pleasing to all, and good in the eyes of these,
Then might the waste desolations of Priam's city cease,
And again Menelaus should lead home Helen of Argos in peace."

So spake he; Athênê and Hêrê in curbed wrath murmured low.
Anigh to each other they sat, and they plotted the Trojans' woe.
Now Athênê held her peace, and she answered him not a word,
Yet against Allfather within her the tameless anger stirred.
But the fury of Hêrê would nowise be pent in her breast, and she said:

"What hast thou to do saying this, O Kronos' son most dread?
And wilt thou make mock of my labour, and bring mine endeavour to naught
And the sweat of my grievous toil, when I wearied my steeds as I wrought
To gather the war-folk for ruin of Priam and Priam's line?
Ay, work thy will—but the hearts of the Gods are not as thine!"

Then wroth was the Cloudrack-sweeper, and answered indignantly:
"Beshrew thee, what manifold evil have all these done unto thee,
Even Priam and Priam's seed, that thine eye will nowise spare
Till the dwellings of Troy shall be wasted, the city builded fair? [parts wide,
Now I ween couldst thou burst through her gates, couldst thou scale her ram-
Couldst thou gorge thee with flesh of King Priam and all that her strong walls hide,
His sons and his people, thy vengeance-hunger were satisfied!
Do after thy pleasure—I would not that this our contention should be
The seed of a bitter feud hereafter for thee and for me.
Howbeit this thing will I tell thee, and deep in thine heart let it stay:—
In the hour when I also shall steadfastly purpose in ruins to lay



Some city the children whereof be exceeding dear to thine heart,
My fury shall have free course, thou shalt nowise withstand me nor thwart.
For the thing that mine heart sore grudged unto thee have I freely given.
For of cities beneath the sun and the star-bestudded heaven,
Even all that the earth-abiders have builded far and near,
Above all to my soul is Ilium the holy exceeding dear,
And her king, and the people of Priam the lord of the mighty spear;
For that ever mine altar therein with the stintless feast hath been dight,
Drink-offering and sacrifice-steam, for our honour is this and our right."
Answered and spake unto him Queen Hêrê the lovely-eyed:
"Three cities there are, more precious to me than all beside,
Argos, and Sparta, Mycenae withal, the broad-wayed town:
Whensoe'er they shall win thine hatred, in ruin cast them down.
I murmur not, not for their sake in the path of thy wrath do I stand;
Yea, though I begrudged thee thy vengeance, and bade thee stay thine hand,
Naught should my murmurs avail, seeing thou art mightier far.
Yet ill were it done in thee if my toil thou shouldst utterly mar,
Seeing I am a God as thou art, of the selfsame lineage I came,
Chief daughter of Kronos, the Lord of unsearchable counsels, I am;
Chief by my birthright, and chief, in that mine is the pride of place
To be called thy Queen, who art King over all the deathless race.
Now therefore as touching this let us each unto other yield,
I unto thee, and thou unto me, and the thing shall be sealed
Of the rest of the Deathless, and thou to Athênê give thy command
Thither to speed where the hosts of Troy and Achaia stand,

And to stir up the warriors of Troy, that they be the first to smite
The battle-triumphant Achaians, transgressing the covenant-plight."
Then the Father of Gods and men denied not Hêrê's request.
Straightway to Athênê he spake the swift-winged word of his hest:
"Forthright to the hosts of Troy and Achaia speed thy flight,
And stir up the warriors of Troy that they be the first to smite
The battle-triumphant Achaians, transgressing the covenant-plight."
Enkindled the more by his word was Athênê the eager-hearted: [darted.
She hath flashed from the peaks of Olympus, and down to the earth hath she
And as when from the hands of the Kronos-begotten falleth a star,
A sign unto seafaring folk, or to some wide host of war,
And forth from the splendour thereof is a fountain of fire-spray leaping,
Even such was the likeness of Pallas Athênê earthward sweeping.
And into their midst she sprang, and astonied were all at the sight,
Horse-quelling Trojans and sons of Achaia harness-dight.
And thus spake this one and that to his fellow that stood thereby:
"Once more shall the bane of the battle, the horror of onset-cry,
Arise; or at last lovingkindness 'twixt nation and nation shall be
From Zeus, for the steward of war and of peace unto menfolk is he."
So murmured the voices the host of Achaians and Trojans among.
But she in a man's shape entered the Trojans' battle-throng.
For the form of spear-mighty Laodokus, son of Antenor, she bare,
And for godlike Pandarus sought, if so be she might find him there.
And she found where the son of Lykaon, the princely and stalwart, stood,
Begirt by the ranks of his spearmen, a mighty battle-wood,



Even they that from streams of Aisêpus had come to the war for his sake.
So she came to the hero's side, and the light-winged word she spake:
"Wilt thou hearken, O war-wise son of Lykaon, to this my rede?—
Wilt thou dare against king Menelaus thy swift-winged arrow to speed?
Of all the Trojans then shouldst thou win thee thanks and renown,
And chief above all Alexander the Prince thy deed should crown;
Of his hand first before all should glorious gifts be thine,
If so be he shall see Menelaus, the hero of Atreus' line,
Slain by thy shaft, on the height of the death-pyre compassed with flame.
Then draw thou against Menelaus, the captain of battle-fame,
And vow to the Light-begotten, the Bow-renowned, to slay
A glorious hecatomb, all of the firstling lambs, in the day
When home to the city of holy Zeleia thou winnest thy way."
Then by Athênê's words was his witless soul overborne.
Straightway he drew forth his bow of the rock-goat's polished horn.
For once, when the wild crag-leaper rose against the sky
On the crest of a scaur, from his ambush beneath the prince let fly,
And there on its back on the rock with the shaft in its heart did it lie.
In sixteen palms was the length of the horns of the quarry told;
And the craftsman knit them together, and shaped to the perfect mould
Of a bow, and he burnished the same, and he tipped the ends with gold.
So Pandarus strung that bow, and he heedfully laid it along
On the ground, and in front of him closed the shields of his henchman-throng,
Lest the warrior sons of Achaia should leap to their feet, and set on,
Or ever the arrow should smite Menelaus, Atreus' son.

He hath lifted the lid of his quiver, a shaft never shot hath he ta'en ;
Black Agony writhed on the barbs, on the feathers was shuddering Pain :
Forthright on the bowstring he laid it, the arrow's bitter bane ;
And he vowed to the Light-begotten, the Bow-renowned, to slay
A glorious hecatomb, all of the firstling lambs, in the day
When home to the city of holy Zeleia he won his way.

The notch of the shaft hath he gripped with the strong bull-sinew, and now
The bowstring toucheth his breast, and the steel head kisseth the bow :
And now by his uttermost might is the great bow strained to a ring—
Clangeth the horn and singeth the sinew as forth from the string
Leapt on the foemen the arrow keen-whetted with eager wing.

Yet the bliss-throned deathless Gods, Menelaus, forgat thee not ;
And chiefly the Prey-giver, daughter of Zeus, for thy need took thought.
For she came and she turned aside the keen shaft's murderous leap,
Just swept it away from his flesh, as a watching mother might sweep
A fly from the face of her child as it lieth in sweet-hushed sleep.
And her hand sped it on to the place where the buckles golden-hasped
Of the baldric met, and the mail overlapped, by the sword-belt clasped.
Into the baldric it plunged, that bitter arrow-head,
On through the curious work of the baldric unswerving it sped :
On through the breastplate cunningly-graven lo it hath passed,
And the taslet that shielded the flesh of the warrior from javelin-cast,—
And herein was his chiefest defence,—howbeit through this did it win ;
And the point of the arrow pierced but the face of the warrior's skin,
And straightway forth of the wound came dark blood trickling thin.



As a battle-steed's cheekpiece is stained with the crimson of Morningland,
Ivory dyed by Maeonian or Carian woman's hand ;—
In a chamber it lieth, while many a hero coveteth sore
To win it, but long shall it lie mid a great king's treasure-store
For the pride of his charioteer and his war-steed's gallant show ;—
So seemed, Menelaus, thy limbs, overstreamed with the blood's red flow
Thy shapely thighs to the knees, and thine ankles fair therebelow.
Shuddered thereat Agamemnon the war-folk's battle-lord,
When he saw how the darkening crimson fast from the wound outpoured :
Shuddered the prince Menelaus, beloved of the God of the Sword.
Yet he looked and he spied how the cord and the barbs stood forth of the flesh,
And his spirit revived in his breast and his courage was kindled afresh.
But heavily sighing amidst of them Lord Agamemnon spake,
Grasping his brother's hand, and a sigh from his war-fellows brake :
" Dear brother, for death unto thee did I seal that covenant-plight,
Sending thee forth for Achaians alone against Trojans to fight.
Lo how the Trojans have smitten thee !—oaths underfoot have they thrust.
Yet no vain thing is an oath, nor the lambs' blood spilt in the dust,
Nor the wine, nor the hand's troth-clasp, wherein they had caused us to trust.
For though the Olympian refrain him, that traitors have respite a day,
At the last shall he smite them for all, and the debt manifold shall they pay :
On their heads shall it be, on their wives and their babes the destruction shall [come ;
For I know this thing in mine heart, and my soul is a seer of their doom—
The day wherein Ilium the holy shall perish will come : it is near
Unto Priam withal, and the folk of the king of the ashen spear.

And Zeus that abideth in heaven, Kronion enthroned over all,
Shall brandish above them his aegis, a blackness of thundercloud-pall,
In his wrath for a nation's treason: without fail this shall befall.
But, O Menelaus, on me sore anguish for thee shall come
If thou die, if thou fill up the measure to-day of thy life-days' doom.
Shamed above all men to Argos the thirst-land again should I turn;
For the sons of Achaia forthright for their fatherland-home will yearn.
We shall leave unto Troy and her king the boast and the triumph-scorn
Over Helen the Argive, and here shall thy bones lie rotting forlorn
In the earth, without fruit of thy toil and the burden of war thou hast borne.
And a pride-uplifted Trojan shall cry in the day of our shame,
As he leaps on the tomb of Atreides the lord of battle-fame:
'Would God Agamemnon's revenges so bravely might speed evermore
As when now he hath led the host of Achaia in vain to our shore,
And back to the land of his fathers is fled with them over the wave
With empty ships, and hath left Menelaus the stalwart and brave!'
So shall they mock—that day let the earth gape wide for my grave."

Then Menelaus the bright-haired heartened his brother and spoke:
"Nay, be of good cheer, and dismay not yet the Achaian folk.
The bitter-keen point of the arrow hath pierced no mortal part,
For the glancing baldric hath checked it; below, my defence from the dart
Was the kilt and the taslet of proof, strong-wrought by the coppersmith's art."

Answered and spake Agamemnon, the nations' battle-lord:
"Would God it might be, Menelaus, according to this thy word!
But the leech shall lay hands on thy wound, and shall measure the arrow-bane,

And thereover his balms shall he spread to assuage thy bitter pain."

Then he cried to Talthybius the godlike, the herald, and thus spake he:

" Haste thee, Talthybius, haste thee, bid hither Machaon to me,
The hero-son of the Healer, Asklêpius the leech of might,
To look upon Atreus' son Menelaus the warrior wight,
Whom some one hath shot with an arrow, a cunning man with the bow,
Some Trojan or Lycian, for glory to him, for our mourning and woe."

So spake he, and hearkened the herald, nor stayed from obeying his hest,
But in haste through the brazen-harnessed array of Achaia he pressed,
Glancing this way and that for Machaon the hero; and now hath he spied
Where he stood with the shielded ranks of his men upon either side,
Strong war-folk that followed him far from Trikkê's horse-fed lea;
And Talthybius came to his side, and the light-winged word spake he:

" Up, son of Asklêpius, Lord Agamemnon calleth thee hence
To see Menelaus the hero, Achaia's battle-fence,
Whom some one hath shot with an arrow, a cunning man with the bow,
Some Trojan or Lycian, for glory to him, for our mourning and woe."

So spake he, and leapt in his bosom his heart as it thrilled with pain;
And away through the wide war-host of Achaia they went, they twain.
And they came unto where Menelaus the bright-haired stood in his blood,
And around him on every hand Achaia's mightiest stood:
And there in their midst was the godlike healer or ever they knew.
Forthwith from the harness-clasping baldric the arrow he drew;
And even as he plucked it aback the keen barbs snapped asunder.
He unbuckled the glancing baldric, he loosened the kilt thereunder,

And the taslet, the mail which the coppersmith's hands had forged so well.
But so soon as he looked on the wound, where the bitter arrow fell,
He sucked forth the blood, and balms thereover with leechcraft skill
Did he spread, the which Cheiron had given to his sire of his heart's good will.
While round Menelaus the battle-helper gathered they,
Near came the Trojans and nearer, the ranks of their shield-array ;
So the heroes did on them their war-gear, their hearts leapt up to the fray.
Then hadst thou seen Agamemnon the godlike not slumbering in sleep,
Neither cowering as cowereth the craven, nor loth for the onset-sweep,
But exceeding fain of the battle, athirst for the glory of war ;
For he lighted adown from his chariot of horses, his brass-flashing car,
While his henchman reined them snorting a little aloof for a space,
Eurymedon,—him Ptolemaius begat, of Peiraieus' race ;—
For he charged him exceeding straitly to have them at hand, whensoe'er
His limbs should be weary with marshalling all those thousands there.
But himself on his feet through rank after rank of the heroes is gone ;
And whomso he marked of the fleet-horsed Danaans fain to set on,
Before them he stood and he heartened them, blithe were his words and bold :
" Argives, forget not your prowess, the gallant spirit of old !
For the liars shall have no help of Zeus Allfather now,
Seeing they were the first that transgressed the oath and the covenant-vow ;
Therefore the vultures shall rend their tender flesh for a prey,
And their dear-loved wives and their nursling babes will we bear away
In our ships, when we smite yon ramparts of pride in the triumphing day."
But whomso he marked hanging back from the terrible battle and stern,



Hotly he chode them, and fierce did the flame of his anger burn:
"Will ye ne'er be ashamed, tongue-fighters of Argos, reproach of your land!
Wherefore in palsy of terror-amazement, like fawns, do ye stand,
Like fawns that the hunters have wearied, o'er leagues of the plain as they fled,
Till fainting they stand, and their spirit within them is utterly dead?
So stand ye in palsy of terror-amazement,—ye fight not, ye!
Will ye wait till the Trojans draw nigh where the tall ships fringe the sea
With their stately sterns looking down on the sands with the foam overdriven,
To see if Kronion o'er cowards will stretch forth his arm out of heaven?"
So ranged he through ranks of the heroes, so marshalled them on to the
And he came as he fared through the press to the Cretan war-array. [fray.
Round war-wise Idomeneus, girded with harness of battle, they stood;
In the forefront Idomeneus, grim as a wild boar out of the wood,
And Meriones with the rearward was kindling the battle-mood.
And King Agamemnon beheld, and his spirit with gladness was stirred,
And cheerly he cried to Idomeneus, hailed him with kindly word:
"Idomeneus, most of the fleet-horsed Danaans honour I thee,
Be it in battle, or labour, what toil soever it be,
Yea, or the feast, where the mightiest Argives gladden their soul
With the flame-flushed wine of the princes that flasheth within the bowl.
For what though the rest of the long-haired men of Achaia-land
Drink but by measure, by thee doth the brimming wine-cup stand
To quaff whensoever thy soul is fain, as by me, evermore.
Up then to the battle, and prove thee the hero unblenching of yore!"
Answered Idomeneus lord of the Cretans, and thus spake he:

"Atreides, thy warfellow trusty and true will I verily be,
Even as aforetime I pledged me, and sealed it by covenant-sign.
But go thou and kindle Achaia's long-haired battle-line,
That we linger no more from the fight, for as water is spilt on the ground
The Trojans have spilled the oaths, and for this shall their sorrows abound,
And their deaths, who have broken the covenant-bond wherewithal we were bound."
So spake he, and on passed Atreides, and glad was his heart and proud;
And he found the Aiantes twain, as he fared through the warrior-crowd:
They were donning their war-gear, and footmen were with them, a battle-storm-cloud.
And as when from the height of a headland outlooking a goatherd hath seen
A cloud coming over the sea with the blast of the West-wind therein,
And blacker it showeth and blacker, as pitch, as he gazeth from far,
Overglooming the sea, and within it the wings of the hurricane are;
And he shuddereth to see, and he driveth his flock to a cave in his dread;
So seemed they, the men god-strengthened, around the Aiantes that sped
Onward in serried battalions dark-heaving to murderous war,
A darkness where shield-flashes lightened and flicker of spears shivered o'er.
And Lord Agamemnon beheld, and his spirit with gladness was stirred,
And he lifted his voice unto these, and he uttered the swift-winged word:
"Aiantes, ye chiefs of the brazen-harnessed Argive band,
How should I bid you bestir you?—to you have I no command,
Who be instant in bidding your people to quit them valiantly.
Ah Zeus Allfather, Athênê, Apollo, that this might be,
That the selfsame spirit were found in the breasts of each and all!
Soon under our hands should the city of Priam bow and fall,

And her pride should be led away captive, and ruined her god-built wall."
So spake he, and left them there, and to others he hasted him then:
And he came upon Nestor the ringing-voiced with the Pylian men,
Setting his folk in array and uprousing the battle-storm.
Round Alastor and Chromius they stood, and by Pelagon's giant form,
And with Haimon the chieftain, and Bias the shepherd of folk, stood they.
The horsemen and chariots he set in the front of his war-array,
And the footmen to rearward he marshalled, full many and valiant and strong,
For a bulwark of war; but the cowards he herded amidst of the throng,
That each man perforce might fight, were he never so little fain.
To his horsemen the old king first gave charge, for he bade them rein
Their horses aback, and in nowise to plunge mid the tangle of fight—
"Let no man in pride of his chariot-prowess or bodily might
Dash forward afront of his fellows to clash with the Trojan foe,
Neither let any give back, for your strength shall be minished so.
But whoso in riding his chariot shall meet any foe's war-car,
Let him reach forth and thrust with his spear, for this shall be better by far.
In such wise were cities and walls overthrown by the valiant of old, [bold."
With such wisdom as this and such courage their hearts were cunning and
So shouted the ancient king, with lore of the old wars wise:
And Lord Agamemnon beheld him with gladness-lightening eyes;
And he lifted his voice, and to Nestor the light-winged word he addressed:
"Would God, old sire, that the heart strong-beating within thy breast [eld!
Were matched by the strength of thy knees, and thy might were unwasted of
But grey hairs come upon all men, and thy strength too have they quelled.

Ah that thou wert of the youths, and another were thus in thy stead!"
Answered him Nestor, Gerenia's chariot-champion, and said:
"Atreides, good sooth I were fain if I might but again be so
As I was in the day when I laid Ereuthalion the godlike low.
Yet not all gifts unto all men the Gods give at once, I trow:
I have looked on the days of my youth, grey hairs be mine heritage now.
Yet still shalt thou find me with horsemen, and still will I give command;
For the staff of the lordship of counsel is yet in the old man's hand.
Nay, spears for the younger-born, whose prowess is not yet fled
As mine, and their hearts are strong in the pride of their lustihead."
So spake he, and onward in gladness of heart went Atreus' seed
Unto Peteos' scion Menestheus, the smiter of the steed.
There stood he with warfolk of Athens, the kindlers of onset-cry;
And Odysseus the mighty in manifold counsel stood hard by.
By his side Kephallenia's ranks—no feeble folk were they—
Stood still, for not yet on their ears had fallen the shout of the fray.
But the war-waves of horse-quelling Trojans and mailèd Achaians but then
'Gan surge in the battle-blast: therefore abode those valiant men;
And they tarried a space till another Achaian squadron first
Should charge on the armies of Troy, and the tempest of battle should burst.
But Lord Agamemnon beholding them loiter was stirred to upbraid,
And the winged words sprang from his passionate-panting lips, and he said:
"O child of a king god-fostered, Peteos' princely son,
And thou, O perfect in guile-craft, wiliest-hearted one,
Why cowering hang ye aback till the fight of the rest be begun?

Is it not seemly that ye in the forefront of battle should stand
Bearing the brunt of the strife when the flame of it fiercest is fanned?
For first before all men the banquet-bidding do ye twain hear
Whensoe'er the Achaians prepare me the princes' feastful cheer.
There is it still your delight to eat of the roast, and still
To quaff of the beakers of honey-sweet wine, so oft as ye will.
But now were ye well content though squadrons ten should pass
From the host of Achaia before you to deal with the pitiless brass."

Dark-frowning made answer Odysseus the manifold-counselled, and said:
"Atreides, what saying is this through the fence of thy teeth that hath fled! We slack in the war!—whensoe'er the Achaians shall waken from sleep
The War-god, and hurl on the Trojans in fury of onset-sweep,
Thou shalt see, if thou wilt,—if thy spirit by deeds of the heroes is stirred,—
Telemachus' father where loudest the thunder of meeting is heard
With the horse-quelling foe—tush, even as wind is thine idle word!"

Then Lord Agamemnon smiled, and he spake to the man toil-proved,
Unsaying the word of reproach, for he marked how his anger was moved:
"O begotten of Zeus and Laertes, O master of subtlety,
Think not I would chide such as thee above measure, nor lord it o'er thee.
For I know what spirit is found in that true breast of thine:
I know of the leal lovingkindness, and thy heart even as mine.
Go to, we will yet make atonement for this unto thee, and if aught
Hath been said that was ill in thy sight, may the Gods bring such unto naught."

So spake he, and left them there, and to others he hasted on:
And he found Diomedes the mighty-hearted Tydeus' son.

Still in the midst of his fair-fashioned chariots and horses he stood ;
And beside him was Sthenelus standing, begotten of Kapaneus' blood.
And Lord Agamemnon beholding him loiter was moved to upbraid,
And the winged words sprang from his passionate-panting lips, and he said :
" Ha ! child of the horse-quelling hero, of Tydeus the king war-wise,
Why dost thou glance up the lanes of the battle with shrinking eyes ?
Not thus was it Tydeus' wont from the cry of the onset to cower ;
Far afront of his fellows he charged on the foe in the perilous hour,
As they that beheld him in battle-toil told, for it did not befall
That ever I met him or saw, but men praised him for chiefest of all.
For he came on a day to Mycenae, yet not as for war to our land,
But to help Polyneikês the godlike to gather a warrior-band
For the host that should march unto Thêbê with god-built walls girt round ;
And they strongly besought we would give of our war-aid battle-renowned.
And our people were minded to give, and they pledged them to do as they prayed :
But Zeus turned back our intent, sending tokens that made us afraid.
So when they were gone from our halls, and afar on their way were sped,
And were come to Aisôpus, the reed-hidden river of grassy bed,
Then Tydeus was sent of the sons of Achaia before their face.
So on ambassage went he, and came to the children of Kadmus' race
In the palace of strong Eteokles, and thronged was the feastful place.
And Tydeus the war-steed-driver a stranger stood alone ;
Yet he quailed not, for all that so many they were, and he but one.
But he challenged them there to the athlete-strife, and the victor's meed
Lightly he won, such a helper Athênê became in his need.





Then the Kadmeians, the goaders of horses, were kindled to wrath,
And they spread the net of ambush amidst of his homeward path.
Fifty, with captains twain, did they choose for the deed to be done,
Even Maion the son of Haimon, a godlike-goodly one,
Polyphontes the battle-bider withal, Autophonus' son.
Yet these against Tydeus availed not, but came on a shameful doom,
For he slew them ; one only of all did he suffer to win safe home,
Even Maion, for signs from the high Gods came, and he gave good heed.
Ay, such was Aetolia's Tydeus : howbeit the hero's seed
Is worser in fight, how better soever in folkmote-rede."

So spake he, and strong Diomedes nothing in answer said,
Having respect to the high rebuke of the King most dread.
But Kapaneus' glorious son with hot words made reply :
"Atreides, thou knowest the truth, what hast thou to do to lie ?
Good sooth, we account us mightier men than our sires by far :
Even we took Thêbê the great seven-gated burg of war.
More strong was their wall than aforetime, and fewer were they of our band,
But the high Gods' signs we obeyed, and the guiding of Zeus's hand.
But our fathers' infatuate folly it was that cast them down :
Therefore thou shalt not exalt against ours our sires' renown."

Dark-frowning made answer and spake unto him Diomedes the strong :
" Lad, give thou heed unto me, and bridle thy malapert tongue !
I have none indignation that King Agamemnon the shepherd of folk
Should uprouse the Achaians, the armour-sheathed, to the onset-shock ;
For on him shall the glory come down if so be the Achaians shall smite

The Trojans before them, and win proud Ilium's sacred height;
And his shall be anguish of soul if Achaia be smitten in fight.
Now, ho for the prowess of old, for the storm of our battle-might!"
He spake, and adown from his car in his harness of battle he sprang;
Terribly clashed the brass on the breast of the hero, and rang,—
Yea, even the valiant of heart might have quailed at the sharp fierce clang.
And as when on a sea-voice-ringing beach the surges are cast,
Wave after wave driven up by the West's overmastering blast;—
In the outsea afar at the first it upheaveth,—anon down-crashing
Bursts on the strand with its thunders, with arches of brine high-lashing
The headlands, and spirts of the foam from the swinging wave-crests flashing;
So rank after rank they rolled onward, the Danaan men, to the war [more;
Without cease: through the trampling the cry of the captains rang out ever-
But in silence the rest of them followed,—thou never hadst deemed, I trow,
That so mighty a host with a voice in their breasts could be marching so,—
Hushed with the fear of their chiefs, and about them glanced and played
The wavering sheen of the armour wherein were their squadrons arrayed.
But the Trojans,—as sheep in the garth of a lord of pastured land
In throngs upon countless throngs at the hour of milking stand,
And they bleat evermore to the young lambs' quavering cry from the fold;
So over the wide war-host their mingled clamour rolled:
For not one was the language of these, nor the speech of their lips the same,
But confusion of tongues, forasmuch as from diverse lands they came.
It was Arês that sped these onward, Athênê the grey-eyed those,
And Terror and Rout, and Strife mad-famishing ever for foes:

Sister she is and companion of Arês the murder-red ;
Little of stature she showeth at first, but her towering head
Soon smiteth the sky, while her feet on the earth amid menfolk tread.
Now in the midst of the armies the Spirit of Hate hath she thrown, [moan.
Through the war-throng sweeping, and doubling the anguish of men, and the
Ever the mid-space narrowed, till closing they mingled, and then
Clashed targets together, and spears, and the fury of brass-mailed men :
Dashed each against other the boss-studded bucklers that strong arms bore,
And the din shrieked up to the heaven, and roar was swallowed of roar ;
And the agony-scream and the triumphing shout maddened up evermore
From the slayers and them that they slew, and the earth ran streams of gore.
And even as wintertide torrents down-rushing from steep hill-sides
Hurl their wild waters in one where a cleft of the mountain divides,
Till the floods of the mighty fountains pent in the deep gorge boil,
And the shepherd afar on the mountains heareth the mad turmoil ;
So from the bickering tangle came shouting and battle-toil.
First of the Trojans an armèd man did Antilochus smite,
Echepôlus the son of Thalysius, who stood in the forefront of fight ;
For he smote on the ridge of his helmet with horse-mane-crest overshed,
And the lance pierced into his forehead, and crashed the brazen head
Clean through the bone, and the veil of the death-mist darkened his sight :
Down fell he as falleth a tower, in the giant-grapple of fight.
On the foot of the fallen the lord Elephênor laid fast hold,
Son of Chalkôdon, a chief of Abantians mighty-souled.
From under the javelins he haled him, full eager to strip the mail

With such haste as he might from the corse,—short space did his striving
For even as he dragged the body Agênor the great-heart spied [avail:
How his buckler gave, as he stooped him, a glimpse of a fenceless side. [limb,
There he stabbed with his brass-headed lance: limb fainted from nerveless
As the life fluttered forth, and above him the toil and the strain waxed grim
Of Achaian and Trojan: as wolves men leapt at the throats of their foes, [470
While hero on reeling hero hailed down pitiless blows.
There Telamonian Aias smote Anthemion's son,
A strong man lusty with life, Simoeisius: years agone
From Ida his mother came down, and by Simois' banks she bore 475
That babe, when she fared with her parents to tell the sheep-flocks o'er.
Simoeisius for this was he named; but to them that had given him birth
Never he rendered the nursing-debt back, for that short on the earth
Was his life on whom lighted the spear of Aias the mighty of heart;
For even as he strode into fight to his right breast flashed that dart. 480
Clear through his shoulder the brass-heavy javelin leapt without stay;
And he fell on the earth in the dust: as a poplar there he lay,
Like the tree that hath shot up high where a wide-spreading fen lieth low,
Smooth-stemmed, but its crest like a cloud-wreath afar up waves to and fro:
And this hath a wainwright felled with his axe of flame-bright steel 485
To bend him a felloe thereof for a fair-wrought chariot's wheel;
And it lieth through many a day on the bank of the river to dry;
Even so did Anthemion's son Simoeisius stricken lie
Before Aias the god-born: but Antiphus glancing in corslet-sheen,
A Priamid, hurled through the press at the slayer his javelin keen; 490

But it missed him, and found out Odysseus' comrade true and tried,
Leukus, smiting his groin as he haled the body aside:
And he fell on the corse, and his hand unclenched the dead man's limb.
Then Odysseus' wrath for his war-fellow waxed exceeding grim,
And he rushed through the forefighters harnessed in flame-bright brazen gear.
Close up to the foemen he came, and he hurled with his glittering spear,
Warily glancing about him, and shrank the Trojans in dread
From the cast of the hero, nor vainly the lance of Odysseus was sped;
But it dashed a bastard son of Priam, Demokoön, down,
Who had come to his help from the herds of his mares by Abydos-town.
Him did Odysseus, in wrath for his friend, with the javelin-cast
Smite on the temple, and on through its fellow-temple passed
The brazen point, and his eyes were veiled with the death-mist-shroud.
Heavily fell he, his war-gear above him clanged aloud.
Then back drew the foremost, yea Hector the glorious faltered back.
Loud shouted the Argives, and plucked forth their slain from the battle-wrack.
On charged they afar: and Apollo was indignation-aflame
From Pergamus gazing, and unto the Trojans his great voice came:
"On, horse-quelling Trojans! blench not from the fight with the Argives, nor
As though fashioned of stone were their flesh, or welded of steel, to avail
To withstand the devouring sword and the storm of the javelin-hail.
On!—for Achilles the child of Thetis the lovely-tressed
Fights not, but broods by the ships on the wrath that is gall in his breast!"
So cried from the city the terrible God; but Achaia's array
Zeus' daughter the glorious Trito-born cheered on to the fray,

Ever ranging the press, where hearts or hands grew slack that day.
Then Amarynkid Diôres in Fate's gin lay overthrown.
On his right leg hard by the ankle crashed a jagged stone.
And the hurler thereof was Peirous, lord of the Thracian host,
Imbrasus' son, who from Ainos had fared to the Troyland coast.
And the merciless rock-shard utterly crushed the sinews twain
And the bones, that backward down in the dust was he hurled amain
In his agony stretching his hands to his well-loved friends in vain,
Gasping his spirit forth: on he that had smitten him rushed,
And stabbed with his spear by the navel, and forth of the grim rent gushed
His bowels to the ground, and over his eyes death-darkness poured.
But as leapt the slayer aback, the spear of Aetolia's lord
Smote him above the pap, and stood in his lung blood-drenched.
Then sprang on him Thoas, and forth that massy spear he wrenched [slay,
From his breast, and he drew from the scabbard his sword keen-whetted to
And amidst of the belly he smote him, and reft his life away.
Yet he spoiled not his armour, for round him closed his henchman-band,
The crested Thracians, each with his long lance gripped in his hand;
And tall though he was and stalwart and haughty-loth to yield,
Yet backward they bore him, and weight-overmastered the giant reeled.
So there in the dust outstretched they lay, those chiefs of pride,
Thracian and brazen-armoured Epeian side by side;
And around them maddened the battle, and hero on hero died. [to pass,
There none might make light of the toil, who should chance through its fury
Though unsmitten of arrow or dart, though unwounded of keen-whetted brass,

He might wander at will through the midst, with his hand in Athênê's own
Kind-clasped, though her arm were his shield from the onrush of javelin or [stone:
For many a man of Achaia and Troy on that wild day,
Outstretched on his face in the dust, by his foe in the death-peace lay.

BOOK V.

Concerning the battle-prowess of Tydeus' son Diomedes.

THEN unto Tydeus' son Diomedes Athênê gave
Prowess and daring, that he 'mid the Argives' bravest the brave
Might shine forth battle-peerless, and win him a glorious name.
And she lit up his helm and his buckler with tireless-blazing flame,
Like the star of the latter summer, whose splendours brightest gleam
Mid the host of heaven, as it leaps from the baths of the Ocean-stream.
Such fire from his shoulders and head at her glamour-spell flashed out,
And into the midst she sped him, the heart of the battle-rout.
Now a man there was of the Troyfolk noble and well-to-do,
Darês the priest of Hephaestus the Fire-god, and sons he had two,
Phegeus, Idaius withal, right cunning in battle-lore.
These severed themselves from the war-press, and down on the hero they bore;
They twain on a chariot, and he rushing onward with fast-flying feet.
So when they were now drawn nigh, each charging the foe to meet,
First from the hand of Phegeus the lance long-shafted was sped;

But over Tydeides' shoulder to leftward the spear-point fled,
That it smote not, and on rushed Tydeides with lance uplifted on high,
And nowise in vain from his hand did the murder-lightning fly. [car.
On his breast 'twixt the nipples it lighted, and hurled him to earth from his
Then hasted Idaius to flee from the fair-wrought chariot afar;
For he dared not champion the dead, to bestride his brother slain,
Else neither had he, even he, escaped from the blackness of bane; [cloud,
But Hephaestus from death redeemed him, and veiled him in darkness of
Lest his priest should be broken-hearted, an old man misery-bowed.
But the horses did Tydeus' son lead forth of the midst of the fray,
And gave to his henchman to lead to the hollow galleys away.
When the Trojans beheld how the sons of the priest were in evil plight,
One fleeing from death, and one by his chariot slain outright,
Sore shaken was each man's soul. But Athênê the flashing-eyed
Grasped furious Arês' hand, and with eager words she cried:
"Arês the manslayer, stormer of ramparts, murder-stained,
Leave we the sons of Troy and Achaia unrestrained
To fight, unto whomso Zeus Allfather shall grant renown;
But for us, let us hold us aloof, and beware Allfather's frown."
Then led she forth of the war-press Arês the fury-heart;
And she caused him to sit on the bank of the roaring Skamander apart.
And the Danaans turned the Trojans to flight, and the war-chiefs then
Slew each his man; and first Agamemnon the king of men
Hurled Odius the huge, Halizonia's lord, from his car to the dust; [40
For even as he turned him to flee, through his back was the king's spear thrust

'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it crashed.
Heavily fell he, his harness of battle clanged and clashed.

Then Idomeneus smote down Phaistus, Maeonian Borus' seed,
Who had hied him from Tarnê's furrows in Priam's quarrel to bleed;
For he turned him to leap on his car, but Idomeneus spear-renowned
With a thrust of his lance long-shafted his rightward shoulder hath found.
From his chariot he fell, into horror of darkness swooning away;
And Idomeneus' henchmen stripped the slain of his war-array.

Then Strophius'.scion Skamandrius, cunning in craft of the chase,
Died by the spear of the prince Menelaus of Atreus' race.
Now the man was a mighty hunter, whom Artemis' self taught well
To smite with his shafts all beasts that in mountain-forests dwell.
Yet Artemis arrow-triumphant on that day nothing availed,
Nor the far-flying arrows of old, and the hands that never failed;
But Atreus' son Menelaus the spear-renowned on his track
Followed fast as he fled from his face, and thrust with his lance at his back
'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it crashed;
And he fell on his face, and his harness above him clanged and clashed.

Then Meriones dealt death to Phereklus, the son of the wright
Harmonides,—deft were his hands in marvellous mystery-might
Of curious work, for Athênê loved him passing well:
Yea, he fashioned for Paris the ships whence all those ills befell,
Which became unto all the Trojans a curse from overseas,
Yea, to himself, forasmuch as he knew not the Gods' decrees:—
Him Meriones overtook, from the shadowing death as he fled,

And down on his right haunch smote, and the spear-point onward sped
Under the hip-bone passing, and cleaving the bladder beneath ; [death.
And he dropped on his knees with a shriek, and was shrouded in darkness of
Now Meges hath smitten Pedaius, the child that a handmaid bare
To Antenor ; yet was he heedfully nursed of Theano the fair ;
For a kindness unto her lord, as her own did she hold him dear ;
But Phyleus' scion the spear-renowned unto him drew near,
And suddenly smote on the nape of his neck with his keen-whetted spear,
And clear through the midst of the teeth and the root of the tongue did it pass ;
And he fell in the dust, with his teeth hard-clenching the death-cold brass.
Then Eurypylus, son of Evaimon, spilt Hypsênor's blood,
Son of Dolopion the lordly, the priest of Skamander's flood.—
And even as a god did the people revere that holy one ;—
Even him hath Eurypylus found, Evaimon's glorious son ;
And fast as he fled from his face, followed faster ; his battlebrand flashed
Down, as he leapt to the stroke, and the arm from the shoulder he slashed.
Blood-streaming it fell ; and his eyes, as they swooned from gloom unto gloom,
Saw the raven wings of Death, and the overmastering Doom.
So these in a grapple of giants the mighty labour wrought :
But Tydeides—thou wouldst not have known him, for whom that hero fought,
Whether for Troy or Achaia his war-wrath raged unquelled ; [85
For he stormed o'er the plain like a river by floods of the wintertide swelled,
When the rush of its waters hath burst through the dikes, and hath scattered
When nothing their barriers avail as upriseth the river's pride, [them wide,
When the fences of fruitful orchard-closes asunder are riven, 90

In the hour of its wild overflow, when the rains have descended from heaven,
And before it in ruin and wreck fair labours of menfolk are driven:
So in ruin and rout were the Trojan battalions from Tydeus' son
Fleeing, for all that so many they were, and he but one.
But the glorious son of Lykaon beheld how he heaped the slain,
How he hurled before him the ranks, as he stormed across the plain.
Upon Tydeus' son, as he rushed on him, straightway his bow he drew,
And on to the hero's strong right shoulder the keen shaft flew,
At the corslet-plate, and the bitter arrow hath pierced it through,
That behind it the point stood out, and the corslet was crimson-dyed.
Then over him triumphed Lykaon's son, and afar he cried:
"Up Trojans gallant of heart! up, war-steed-goaders keen!
For the chiefest Achaian is smitten: not long shall his strength, I ween,
Outlast my mighty shaft, if in truth 'twas the guiding hand
Of the Archer, the Zeus-begotten, that brought me from Lycia-land."
So vaunting he cried, but the arrow had quelled not the hero's life.
But aback to his chariot and horses he stepped, and a moment from strife
He stayed him, and spake unto Sthenelus, there as he held them apart:
"Haste thee, O Kapaneus' son, come down from the car, true heart,
And so shalt thou draw from my shoulder the bitter-rankling dart."
Leapt Sthenelus down from the chariot to earth, his bidding to do.
And clean through the shoulder the length of the swift-winged shaft he drew;
And out through the pleated tunic the red blood sprang through the air.
Thereat Diomedes the battle-helper cried in prayer:
"Hear me, thou child of the Aegis-bearer, unwearied Power!

If ever with kindly intent thou hast stood in the perilous hour
Of the fight by my sire, unto me be now, O Athênê, near!
Vouchsafe me to slay him,—yea, but to come within cast of spear,—
Who hath shot me or ever I knew, and vaunteth in triumph-glee
How that yet but a little while, and the sun no more shall I see."
So prayed he, and Pallas Athênê heard that hero's call;
And lightsome she made his limbs, his feet and his hands withal.
And there at his side she stood, and she sped the winged word-flight:
"Be thou of good cheer, Diomedes, against yon foes to fight.
For now with the aweless might of thy father thy breast have I filled,
Of chariot-champion Tydeus, the wielder of the shield.
And the mist that hath lain on thine eyes heretofore, I have purged it away,
And so shalt thou clearly discern 'twixt God and man this day.
And it shall be, that if there come hither a God to make proof of thy might,
Against the Deathless Ones thou shalt not in any wise fight;
Save only if Aphroditê, the daughter of Zeus, shall pass
Into battle, thou shalt not spare her, but smite with the keen-whetted brass."
So Pallas Athênê spake, and behold, she was no more there:
And into the forefront of battle again did Tydeides fare.
Furious-fain was his spirit to fight with the Trojans before;
But there flamed up within him a war-wrath then that was three times more.
As a lion he was that a shepherd, in guarding his sheep full-fleeced,
Hath but grazed overleaping the fold, but hath quelled not the terrible beast.
He hath roused but his strength, and thereafter no more for their help draweth near,
But he fleeth aback to the steading, and leaveth them there in their fear.

So he rendeth in frenzy of ravin ; in huddled heaps they fall,
Till areek with the slaughter in fury he leapeth the high garth-wall.
Even so Diomedes in fury plunged mid the Trojan array.
Astynous there and Hypeiron, shepherd of folk, did he slay :
Swift to the nipple of this one the javelin flashed from his hand ;
That on the collar-bone hard by the neck by his mighty brand
Was smitten, and clean from the back and the neck was the shoulder shred.
Then he left them, and fast after Abas and young Polyidus he sped :
Children of Eurydamas the dream-arreder they were :
Yet he dreamed no dreams for them at their parting, that ancient seer,
Nor had vision of strong Diomedes that came on his sons and slew.
Then after Xanthus and Thoön, the children of Phainops, he flew,
Striplings both, and their sire was with grief-stricken eld outworn.
No son of his body beside to inherit his wealth was there born.
There hath he slain them : from both the precious life hath he reft ;
And sore lamentation and heart-stricken grief to their father are left ;
For not from the war shall he welcome their home-coming feet any more,
And the tearless eyes of kinsmen shall gloat on his hoarded store.
 Two children of Priam Dardanus' son, by the hero slain,
Echemmon and Chromius, fell ; for in one car rode they twain.
And as leapeth a lion mid kine, and breaketh bone from bone
In the neck of a heifer or cow in a forest-pasture lone,
Even so these twain from the chariot by Tydeus' son overthrown
Were hurled sore loth to the earth : their war-gear then did he strip ;
And the horses he gave to his henchmen to drive to his hollow ship.

Then Aeneas beheld him cleaving the war-ranks havoc-wasted ;
And he hied him forthright through the battle, through hurtling of lances he [hasted,
In quest of the godlike Pandarus searching the Trojans among.
And he found the son of Lykaon, the hero princely and strong.
Then stood he before his face, and with eager breath 'gan say :
" Pandarus, where is thy bow ?—and thy winged shafts, where be they ?
And thy glory, wherein there is none that may match him with thee in our land,
Neither any in Lycia that dwelleth may vaunt him more cunning of hand ?
Nay, lift up thine hands unto Zeus, and speed forth a shaft from thy bow
At yonder triumphant destroyer who worketh us all this woe,
Whosoever he be that hath laid full many a champion low ;—
Unless it be haply a God that for sacrifice rendered not
Is wroth with us : fearful it is when a God's wrath waxeth hot."
Unto him the glorious son of Lykaon answering spoke :
" Aeneas, counsellor-chief of the mail-clad Trojan folk,
Meseemeth the man is even as Tydeus' war-wise son ;
For his buckler I know, and his helm, and the tossing crest thereon ;
Yea, and the steeds I behold—yet I know not—a God it may be.
But and if it be Tydeus' war-wise son, and none other than he,
Not but with help of a God is he maddening thus, but anigh
Goeth one of the Deathless, with shoulders in cloud-veil hid from mine eye,
Who hath turned from his body aside mine arrow in act to light.
For already my bow have I drawn, and I marked the winged shaft smite
His rightward shoulder, and clean through the corslet-plate it sped.
Yea, and I deemed I should hurl him to Hades to dwell with the dead :

Yet I quelled him not—'tis a God wrath-kindled in very deed.
And behold, no horses have I, neither chariot in this my need :
Yet I ween in the halls of Lykaon eleven fair chariots bide ;
Fresh-fashioned they be, new-garnished, and hung from side to side
With awning-cloths, and by each of them standeth a yoke of twain
Idly champing the spelt and the barley's hoary grain.
Ah, many a time and oft did Lykaon the spearman grey
Charge me, or ever I fared from our stately palace away,
Yea, bade that by thundering steeds high-borne on the battle-car
I should lead in the roar of onset the ranks of Ilium's war.
But I would not hearken nor heed,—sure this had been more for my good,—
Being careful for those my steeds, lest haply the stintless food
That never they lacked should fail where the thronging thousands meet.
So I needs must leave them, and fare unto Ilium's burg on my feet,
Putting my trust in my bow and the shafts that should profit me not.
For at chieftains twain this day hath mine arrow already been shot,
Even Tydeus' and Atreus' sons, and from both sprang very blood
As my shaft smote home, yet I roused but the more their battle-mood.
Wherefore in evil hour did I take the curved bow down
From the peg, in the day when I came unto lovely Ilium-town,
Showing kindness to Hector the godlike, with them that followed me.
But if ever again I return, if again with mine eyes I shall see
My fatherland-home and my wife, and my palace's stately height,
Then let an outland foe smite off mine head forthright,
If I spare to take this bow in mine hands, and to knap it in twain,

And to cast on the blazing fire, for as idle wind is it vain."
Answered Aeneas, the Captain of Troy's array, and he said:
"Nay, talk not thus: howbeit the mischief shall nowise be stayed
Till thou and I have made trial with chariot and battle-steed,
Till with yonder destroyer we match our might in warrior's weed.
Go to, get thee up to my chariot, and so shalt thou give good heed
To the horses of Tros, how featly over the plain they speed
Hither and thither triumphant in chase and unperilled in flight.
Safe back to the city withal shall they bring us, if victory-might
Unto Tydeus' son Diomedes by Zeus shall be granted again.
Come now, take thou in thine hands the lash and the shining rein,
And I in the chariot to fight yon foeman will take my stand.
Or thou, wilt thou bide his onset, committing the steeds to mine hand?"
Unto him made answer again Lykaon's glorious son:
"Aeneas, the reins take thou, and the horses, for these be thine own.
Better, I ween, will they speed for the charioteer that they know
The curvèd car, if so be we must flee from the face of the foe;
Lest haply in sudden affright mad-plunging thy voice they lack,
And fail us at need, from the battle refusing to bear us aback,
And the scion of Tydeus the great-heart should leap on us there, and slay,
And should drive the thunder-footed steeds to the galleys away.
Nay, but the chariot and steeds let the hand of the master guide,
And I with the keen-whetted spear yon champion's coming will bide."
So spake they, and into the chariot cunningly-carven they stepped,
And swiftly against Tydeides in fury of onset they swept.

Then Kapaneus' glorious scion beholdeth them drawing anigh,
And he speedeth the winged word-flight, and to Tydeus' son doth he cry:
" O Tydeus' son Diomedes, beloved of my soul, I see
Two strong men fain of the battle that bear down fast upon thee.
Measureless prowess is theirs, full deft with the bow is the one,
Pandarus, yea and he nameth him lord Lykaon's son.
And Aeneas nameth his father Anchises, a prince of the earth,
And Aphroditê the Goddess was she that gave him birth.
Go to, let us flee on the car: storm not in the forefront of strife
So daring-reckless of odds, lest haply thou lose thy life."
Spake Diomedes the strong with sternly-lowering brow:
" Talk not of fleeing to me: thou shalt not persuade me, I trow.
For it is not my father's son that will fight as the skulkers fight,
Neither blench from the onset, while yet unbroken abideth my might.
The chariot—I scorn to ascend it, but even as I stand here,
So will I meet them: Pallas Athênê forbids me to fear.
Yea, and the fleetfoot horses shall not bear back these twain,
To deliver them out of our hands, though one escape from bane.
This thing will I tell thee moreover, and deep in thine heart let it bide:
If Athênê the counsel-bounteous shall grant to me victory-pride,
That I smite these twain unto death, my fleetfoot steeds shalt thou stay
Here, fastening back the reins to the chariot-rail straightway.
And remember thou that thou spring on the steeds of Aeneas then,
And drive them forth of the Trojans amidst of Achaia's men.
For these be of that same race of the which Zeus Thunder-lord

Gave unto Tros in requital for Ganymede unrestored,
Of all steeds even from dawn unto sunset the noblest blood.
But Anchises the king of men stole seed of the god-given brood;
For he privily brought of his mares unto King Laomedon's stud,
Whereof, as it fell, came six that were foaled unto him in his halls.
Four is he keeping yet, and he nurtureth them in his stalls:
And Aeneas the panic-wafter, his son, received of him twain.
Now if we might win for us these, high glory thereof should we gain."
So there of the deed and the hope of renown communed they two:
And louder the horse-hoofs thundered, as nearer the foemen drew.
Then first the glorious son of Lykaon shouted aloud:
"O stout-heart, battle-crafty, thou scion of Tydeus the proud,
Not by the bitter-keen shaft wast thou quelled, when it sped from my bow:
But my javelin now will I prove, if perchance I may lay thee low."
So cried he, and swung up on high the lance long-shafted, and cast;
And it smote on the shield of Tydeides, and on through the buckler passed
The flight of the brazen head, and it came to the corslet anigh.
Then loudly the son of Lykaon shouted the triumph-cry: trow
"Thou art smitten!—art stabbed through the belly of thee!—short time, I
Shall thy strength outlast it, and high renown hast thou given me now!"
Spake Diomedes the stalwart, and undismayed cried he:
"Thou hast missed me and smitten me not; and I ween ye shall not go free,
Ye twain, till that one of you falling shall glut with the life blood of him
Arês the stubborn-shielded, the warrior murder-grim."
So spake he, and hurled, and Athênê guided the javelin on

To the nose by the eye: through the ivory-gleaming teeth hath it gone;
And the brass unwearied severed the tongue of the man at the root,
And forth to the light from beneath his chin did the point of it shoot.
From the chariot he fell, and above him his war-gear flashing rang,
All wavering sheen, and aside the fleet steeds startled sprang. [death-pang.
And the soul shuddered forth, and the strength of him swooned in the fierce
Down leapt Aeneas with buckler and spear sudden-clutched for the fray,
Adread lest the sons of Achaia should hale that corpse away.
And there he bestrode the dead as a lion in pride of his might,
Outstretching before him his spear and his buckler's orb of light,
Fierce-eager to kill whosoever should come to take that prey.
And he shouted his terrible cry: but a stone in his path that lay
Hath Tydeides seized,—such a mass as not two men might bear,
Such men as be now on the earth, yet lightly he swung it in air;—
On the hip of Aeneas he dashed it, there where the thigh-bone ball
Turneth about in the hip, which men the cup-bone call.
So the cup-bone it crushed, and it snapped the tendons twain withal;
And the rough rock flayed the skin. On his knees did the hero fall;
And he stayed him, propping his weight with his brawny hand on the ground;
And a mist and a blackness of night fell shrouding his eyes around.
And there of a surety Aeneas the king of men had died,
But the daughter of Zeus, Aphroditê, his peril swiftly espied,—
Even she to Anchises that bare him in days when he tended the kine,—
And around her beloved son her snow-white arms did she twine;
And before him a fold of her mantle glistering-bright she cast

For a fence from the darts, lest a foeman with fleet steeds following fast,
Hurling his lance at his breast should take his life away.
So went she bearing her dear-loved son from the midst of the fray.
Then Sthenelus, Kapaneus' son, remembered with diligent heed
The behest of the lord Diomedes, the battle-helper's rede.
So his own steeds thunder-footed aloof from the din did he stay,
Fastening back the reins to the chariot-rail straightway.
On the car-steeds beautiful-maned of Aeneas leapt he then,
And forth of the Trojans he drave them amidst of Achaia's men.
To Deïpylus' hand did he give them, the comrade he loved the best
Of the friends of his youth, for that even as his own were the thoughts of his breast,
To drive to the ships: but again to his own war-chariot's floor
He sprang, and the shining reins he grasped in his hand once more.
Then with the strong-hoofed horses he hastened battle-keen
Where Tydeides with pitiless spear followed after the Cyprian Queen.
For he knew her a weakling Goddess, and not as the Dread Ones are
That sway the victory-balance when heroes be met for war,—
Not as Athênê she, nor Enyo the city-waster!
So he came on the fleer at last, through the throngs of the strife as he chased her.
Then the scion of great-heart Tydeus suddenly leapt, and upraised
His keen-whetted spear, and the skin of her tender hand he grazed.
For the lance-point rent the ambrosial veil that around her clung,
The robe that the Graces wove, and the flesh of her palm it stung
By the wrist, and therefrom the heavenly blood of the Goddess flowed,
The ichor that runs in the veins of them of the Blessèd Abode:

For they taste not of bread, neither drink they of wine with its face of flame:
For this cause bloodless are they, and the Deathless Ones their name.
She hath dropped her son from her arms, at the sharp pang shrieking aloud;
But the hands of Apollo have caught him away in darkness of cloud
Enshrouded, lest haply a foeman with fleet steeds following fast
Should thrust out the life from his breast with a deadly javelin-cast.
Loud after her rang Diomedes the battle-helper's shout:
"Begone, thou daughter of Zeus, from the war and the battle-rout!
Doth this not suffice thee, to cozen with guile light women and frail?
But and if thou wilt mingle in battle, I trow thine heart shall quail
With affright, yea even to hear, as thou sittest afar, the tale!"
So spake he, but she in a frenzy of grievous torment fled;
And her from the midst of the war-press Iris the Wind-foot led
Racked with the pain of her hurt, with the fair flesh darkening round.
And Arês the wild-heart sitting to left of the battle she found.
His lance on a cloud was leaned, and his fleet steeds stood thereby.
And she fell on her knees, and besought her brother with earnest cry
For his golden-frontleted horses, the tramplers of the sky:
"O brother belovèd, vouchsafe thy steeds!—O grant my prayer,
That so to Olympus, the home of the Deathless Ones, I may fare.
Tormented I am by a wound which was dealt by the deathling hand
Of Tydeides—in strife against Zeus Allfather this day would he stand!"
Now the golden-frontleted steeds to her prayer hath Arês given:
She hath mounted the chariot, her heart the while with anguish riven;
And beside her hath Iris mounted: the reins through her fingers she drew;

And she lashed the coursers fleet, and with right good will they flew.
So they came to the steeps of Olympus, the Gods' high palace-hall;
And there swift Iris the Wind-foot unyoked and stabled in stall
The horses, and cast them ambrosia for food, for immortals were these.
But low Aphroditê the Goddess fell on Diônê's knees.
And her did the soft-enfolding arms of her mother take;
And she soothed her with loving caress, and she uttered the word and spake:
"Now which of the Heaven-folk, darling, this unto thee hath done
Roughly and rudely, as though thou hadst sinned in the sight of the sun?"
Then Aphroditê the laughter-winsome her sorrow told:
"He hath stabbed me—Tydeus' son Diomedes the overbold,
Because I essayed to rescue my dear-loved son from the war,
Aeneas, for dearest of men is he unto me by far.
Not betwixt Troy and Achaia now is the shout of the fray,
But now are the Danaans warring with them that abide for aye."
And to her made answer Diônê the Goddess divine again:
"Nay, darling, endure it, and bear for a little thy bitter pain.
For many in heaven that abide have been evil entreated so
Of men, when God in his spite against God would work him woe.
So was it with Arês, when Otus and Ephialtes the strong,
The sons of Alôeus, held him a captive prisoned long.
For thirteen months in a brazen cell was he fettered fast;
Yea, Arês the battle-insatiate had perished there at the last,
But the bride of the giants' father, Eeriboia the fair,
Told it to Hermes, who stole him out of their murder-lair,

When now he was pining to death by the strain of the gyves outworn.
So was it with Hêrê ; the stalwart child to Amphitryon born
Suddenly shot with a shaft three-barbed at her rightward breast,
And smote her with torment of pitiless pangs that knew no rest.
Yea, Hades the terrible tasted the shaft swift-sped from the cord
In the hour when the selfsame man, the seed of the Aegis-lord,
In Hell-gate amidst of the dead gave him over to torment a prey.
Then he fled to the palace of Zeus and Olympus far away,
Anguished in soul, thrilled through with his pangs, for the rankling dart
Stood deep in his mighty shoulder, and bitterness filled his heart.
But pain-quelling salves on the wound Paiaion spread, whereby
He restored him, for not as the deathlings he was, that be born but to die.
Ah desperate !—reckless worker of lawless deeds and fell,
Who vexed with his arrows the Gods in the halls of Olympus that dwell !
But on thee this man hath been set by Athênê the grey-eyed Queen :
Ah fool !—for the son of Tydeus knoweth not this, I ween,
That whoso shall fight with the Deathless, not long be his days on the earth.
No children shall prattle about his knees in their winsome mirth
When he cometh aback from the strife and the terrible battle-throng.
Therefore let Tydeus' son, yea, though he be never so strong,
Take heed lest a mightier than thou in the battle against him rise,
Lest Aigialeia, the child of Adrêstus, the passing-wise,
Shall start from her haunted slumbers, and waken her maids with her cries,
For her lord and her love, for the pride of Achaia, wailing in grief,—
That stately wife of the prince Diomedes, the horse-quelling chief."

She spake, and she wiped the ichor away with her cool soft palms:
Soothed was the hand, and the pangs were assuaged, as with comforting balms.
But Athênê and Lady Hêrê with hard eyes looked thereon,
And with heart-stinging gibes they wrought to provoke Zeus, Kronos' son.
And Athênê the flashing-eyed in the midst of the Deathless spake:
"Allfather, for whatso I say wilt thou bid thine anger awake?
The Lady of Cyprus would tempt some bride of Achaia to flee
With a man of the Trojans, the folk that she loveth wondrously.
So it fell, as she fondled a fair-robed dame of Achaia-land,
That the pin of the golden brooch hath scratched her dainty hand."
So did she speak, but the Father of Gods and menfolk smiled;
And he called Aphroditê, and spake to his golden-glorious child:
"Darling, what hast thou to do with the rage of the battle-fire?
Follow after the kindlings of love, and the crown of the heart's desire;
And in strife shall Athênê delight her, and Arês shall glut his ire."
So there in the halls of Olympus in sorrow and scorn spake they.
But still on Aeneas sprang Diomedes the battle-stay,
Though he knew that the arms of Apollo about him were cast for a shield;
Yet he stood not in awe of the God and his might, but, desperate-willed,
Ever pressed on Aeneas to kill him, and spoil his war-array.
Thrice did he leap to the onslaught, furious-fain to slay,
And thrice 'neath Apollo's buffet his glittering buckler rang.
But when for the fourth time on like an angry God he sprang,
Then with a terrible voice Far-darter Apollo cried: [pride
"Think, offspring of Tydeus, and shrink, neither dare in the thoughts of thy



To match thee with Gods: deem not there is any comparison found [ground."
'Twixt the race of the Deathless, and men that must tread on the face of the
Then backward Tydeides shrank, and forbore for a little the fight,
In dread of the wrath of Apollo, the Lord of the arrows of light.
And aloof from the war-press Apollo hath laid Aeneas down
In the place where standeth his temple in holy Pergamus-town.
And of Lêto and Artemis arrow-triumphant in that great shrine
Was he healed of his hurt and anointed with chrism of glory divine.
But a wraith by Apollo the King of the Silver Bow was made
In semblance such as Aeneas, and like him harness-arrayed:
And around that phantom form did the grapple of conflict close
With Trojans and mighty Achaians stabbing and hailing blows
On the bucklers and tasselled targets that shielded the hearts of their foes.
Then unto Arês the wild-heart Phoebus Apollo cried:
"Arês the manslayer, stormer of ramparts, murder-dyed,
Wilt thou not enter the battle and pluck yon man from the fray,
Tydeides?—sure he would fight against Zeus Allfather to-day;
For the Cyprian Queen in the hand at the wrist hath he wounded first,
Thereafter on me, even me, like a God in his anger he burst."
So spake he, and sat him down upon Pergamus' topmost height.
But Arês the Slayer to kindle the Trojans plunged mid the fight
In the likeness of Akamas, fleetfoot lord of the Thracian folk;
And to hearten the sons of Priam with masterful hest he spoke:
"Ho children of Priam the great king fostered of Zeus, how long
Will ye suffer your folk to be slain of Achaia's battle-throng?



Shall it be till your strong-built gates shall ring with their onset-cheer?
Low lieth the man that we honoured even as Hector's peer,
Even Aeneas the son of Anchises the mighty-souled.
Let us save from the trampling and tumult our comrade stout and bold."

So cheered he the folk, till the hearts of them all with the war-flame glowed:
And straightway with Hector the godlike Sarpedon bitterly chode:
"Hector, and where is thy prowess, the might that was thine of yore?
Thou saidst, time was, that unhelped by an outland host of war,
With thy brethren and marriage-kin thou wouldst hold this city alone.
Where are they?—I see them not—mine eyes may discern of them none.
But as dogs that encompass a lion, so backward skulk they afraid.
It is we that be fighting, we, thine outland battle-aid!
See, I am thy battle-helper; I journeyed a weary way
From a far land, even from Lycia, where Xanthus' eddies play.
There left I a dear-loved wife, and the babe in her arms that she bore,
And goodly possessions, which many a lackland coveteth sore.
Yet I reck not, but kindle the Lycians to battle, and pant for the fray
With a champion, albeit no substance of mine lieth here for a prey,
No spoil as of cattle or treasure for foemen to bear away.
But thou, thou art idly standing, with never a word of cheer
That thy people may bide the strife for the sake of their dear ones here!
Take heed lest the toils of a net that none shall escape may close
Around you, and ye be delivered a spoil and a prey to your foes.
Ay, soon will they utterly waste your city builded fair!
What, man, thine heart should be heavy by night and by day with its care!

Thou shouldst plead with the chiefs of the hosts that have come from afar for thy sake
To quit them like men,—so haply the shame from thy name shouldst thou take!"
So spake he, and Hector's soul by the word of his chiding was stung:
Forthright from his chariot to earth in his harness of war hath he sprung:
And brandishing lances keen he ranged the host about,
Cheering them on to the fight, and he wakened the onset-shout.
So they rallied, and front to front with the foemen their battle was stayed:
And the Argives closed their ranks, and awaited them undismayed.
And as when by a wind the chaff through a threshing-floor is borne,
When the winnowing-fans are waving, and She of the Golden Corn
Parteth the grain from the chaff by the wind-blast lightly tossed,
And the chaff-heaps whiten and whiten; so the Danaan host
From head to heel grew white with the dust that, raised on high
By the feet of the steeds, rolled up to the brazen vault of the sky,
As the charioteers wheeled round, and the cars plunged back mid the fight.
On came the tempest of buffeting hands, and in darkness of night,
For a veil to the onset of Troy, did Arês enshroud the fray,
Hitherward ranging and thither: so toiled he the hest to obey
Of Apollo Golden-sword, who had bidden him kindle the heart
Of Troy to the fight, so soon as he marked Athênê depart
From the strife, for that she was the stay of the Danaan battle-line.
Then sent Apollo Aeneas forth of his wealth-heaped shrine;
And the breast of the shepherd of hosts with dauntless courage he filled:
And lo, mid his comrades Aeneas was standing: their hearts were thrilled
With joy to behold him alive in their midst, and mighty of limb,



And gallant of spirit: howbeit was none that questioned him;
For the war-toil suffered them not which Silverbow had waked,
And earth-curse Arês, and Strife of the murder-thirst unslaked.
The Aiantes the while, and Odysseus, and strong Diomedes withal,
Were cheering the Danaans on: there was naught could their souls appal,
Nor the fury nor whirlwind rush of the Trojans charging on:
But steadfast they stood as a rampart of clouds that Kronos' son
In a windless calm hath builded along the mountain steeps,
Utterly moveless, so long as the might of the North-wind sleeps,
And the rage of the wild storm-breathers, which scatter in disarray
The shadowing clouds that flee from their shrieking blasts away:
So steadfast the Danaans bided the Trojans, and dreamed not of fear.
And Atreides ranged through the press with many a word of cheer:
"Friends, quit you like heroes, and take to you hearts unblenching-bold!
In the grim death-grapple bethink you how many your deeds behold.
For of such as bethink them so more live than be slain in the strife;
But the fleer is fameless: yea, and he shall not deliver his life."
Then smote he a man in the forefront of fight with his lance swift-darted,
Dêicoön; comrade he was of Aeneas the mighty-hearted,
Pergasus' son, whom they honoured even as Priam's seed,
For that foremost he was in the onset, in battle good at need.
But Lord Agamemnon's spear to the champion's buckler flew:
Nothing availed him the shield, for the brazen head burst through
And on through the baldric, and into the nether belly it flashed;
Heavily fell he, and o'er him his armour clanged and clashed.

Thereafter Aeneas slew of the Danaan mighty ones
Orsilochus, Krêthon withal, Diokles' hero-sons.
Their father in Phêrê, the beautiful-builded city, abode,
And his substance was great, and by lineage he sprang from a River-god,
Even Alpheius, whose broad stream floweth o'er Pylian sand,
Who begat Orsilochus, lord of a many-peopled land.
From Orsilochus sprang there a son great-hearted, Diokles hight;
And there sprang from the lord Diokles twin sons, men of might,
Orsilochus, Krêthon withal, full cunning in battle-lore.
And these, when they came unto manhood, sailed to the Ilian shore:
To the war-steed-land with the Argives in black-hulled ships did they speed,
To avenge Agamemnon and Lord Menelaus, Atreus' seed.
And there did death end all, and o'ershroud them in endless night.
They were like unto lions twain that be reared on the mountain-height
By their mother amidst of the brakes of a forest dark and deep;
And they snatch from the byre the ox, from the fold the fatling sheep,
And they harry the homesteads of menfolk, until it shall come to pass
That they too perish by hands of men on the keen-whetted brass.
Even so overborne by the hands of Aeneas did these twain fall;
Yet stately they fell as the kings of the forest, the pine-trees tall.
Sore pitied them Arês-beloved Menelaus in death as they lay,
And he rushed through the forefront of fight in his flashing war-array,
Shaking his lance; and the flame of his fury Arês fanned,
With intent that the hero should die by Aeneas' mightier hand.
But Antilochus, scion of Nestor the great-heart, beheld his plight,



And he strode through the forefront, for sorely he feared lest mischief should
On the shepherd of hosts, and their toil should be suddenly nothing worth. [light
And even as they twain stood with the keen-whetted spears stretched forth
In their strong hands, face to face, aglow with the battle-mood,
Lo, by the side of the shepherd of hosts Antilochus stood.
But Aeneas, though never so keen a warrior, might not bide
When standing against him he saw two champions side by side.
So forth of the press they haled to the host of Achaia the slain,
And into the hands of their comrades gave those hapless twain ;
Then they turned them about, and they plunged mid the forefront of battle again.
Then laid they Pylaimenes, peer of the War-god, dead on the field,
Chief of the Paphlagonians, the great-heart men of the shield ;
For there came on him Atreus' son Menelaus the spear-renowned,
And the lance-head, there as he stood, his life through the collar-bone found.
Then Antilochus smote down Mydon, his henchman and charioteer,
Stout son of Atymnius,—back was he turning his steeds in his fear—
With a stone in the midst of his elbow he smote : from his hands hath he hurled
The ivory-studded reins, and adown in the dust are they whirled.
Then Antilochus leapt on him : into his temple his falchion he thrust :
Gasping he reeled from his fair-fashioned car, and was dashed to the dust.
Headlong in suchwise he fell as on shoulders and head to stand ;
There for a space was he stayed, for exceeding deep was the sand,
Till spurned by the hoofs of his horses outstretched in the dust he lay :
And Antilochus lashed them, and drove to the host of Achaia away.
Then Hector across the battle espied them, and thitherward leapt

Shouting his war-cry : behind him the strong battalions swept
Of the Trojans, while Arês and mighty Enyo strode before.
The ruthless tumult of battle the grim War-goddess bore ;
And Arês tossed in his hands a giant-shafted spear ;
Now stormed he to vanward of Hector, and now swept forward the rear.
Then shuddered the battle-stay Diomedes in awe-struck dread.
And even as a shiftless man that is crossing a plain wide-spread
Is stayed by a swift-rushing river in flood, as seaward it sweepeth
Roaring with foam, and aback from the outrush of waters he leapeth ;
Even so shrank backward Tydeides, and loud to his men cried he :
"O friends, no marvel we wonder that Hector the godlike should be
A warrior spear-triumphant, a valiant man of war ;
For beside him there standeth a God ever keeping destruction afar.
Lo there by his side goeth Arês in shape of a mortal wight !
But with faces turned evermore to the Trojans, and not as in flight,
Give back, lest perchance we be found with the very Gods to fight."
So cried he, and nearer the Trojans, and ever nearer, drew.
Then warriors twain heart-full of the war-glee Hector slew,
Menesthles and Anchialus, in the selfsame chariot borne.
And great Telamonian Aias had ruth of them lying forlorn ;
And he hurled with his glittering javelin, as up to the foe he strode,
And Amphius Selagus' scion he smote, who in Paisus abode,
Wealthy in substance and tilth-land : yet was he drawn by his doom
Unto Priam and Priam's sons with his battle-aid to come.
Sped to his baldric the swift-rushing javelin of Telamon's son,



And into his nether belly the lance long-shafted hath gone ;
And he fell with a crash. Then Aias to spoil his battle-gear
Rushed on : howbeit the Troyfolk rained down spear on spear ;
And aslant from his shield did many a keen point gleaming glance.
But he setteth his heel on the dead, and he draweth the brazen lance
From the flesh : yet he might not strip from the shoulders of him that he slew
The goodly mail ; for the darts overwhelmed him, so thickly they flew.
Yea, he shrank from the ring of defenders, the Trojans haughty-souled,
For they pressed on him spear in hand, those champions many and bold ;
And tall though he was and stalwart, and haughty-loth to yield,
Yet backward they bore him, and weight-overmastered the giant reeled.
So there in the desperate toil of the grim death-grapple they strove.
And against Sarpedon the godlike the doom overmastering drove
Tlepolemus, Hêraklês' scion, a hero tall and strong.
So anigh to each other they came, stepping forth from the battle-throng,
The son and the son's son they of Zeus the Cloudrack-lord ;
Then spake Tlepolemus first, and he cried the challenging word :
" O Counsellor-chief of the Lycians, what hast thou to do to cower
From the fray like a battle-witless wight in the perilous hour ?
Men call thee the child of the Aegis-bearer—they lie therein !
Not a little thou lackest, I ween, of the prowess of that heaven-kin
Which sprang from the loins of Zeus in the days of the men of old.
Not as of thee is the tale of the might of Hêraklês told,
Even my father, the steadfast-hearted, the lion-souled,
Who came for Laomedon's horses of yore to the Troyland coast.

But six were his ships, and exceeding few were the men of his host;
Yet he wasted Ilium-town, till her streets all desolate lay.
But thou—thy spirit is craven, and minisheth still thine array.
Ha, not for a bulwark of battle to Troy hast thou fared, I trow,
From Lycia-land, though never so stalwart thine outward show!
Thou shalt pass through the gates of the grave by me, even me, laid low."
Made answer to him Sarpedon, the Lycian champion grim:
"Tlepolemus, verily Ilium the holy was smitten of him
Because of Laomedon's folly, the pride-uplifted king,
Who requited his toil and his kindness with cursing and threatening,
Neither paid him the mares for the which he had come from a far-away land.
But for thee—I tell thee that slaughter and black death dealt by my hand
Shall be wreaked on thee here, and thou by my javelin dashed to the ground
Shalt give glory to me, and thy soul unto Hades the steed-renowned."
He spake, and Tlepolemus lifted his ashen spear on high,
And from each man's hand did his shaft at the selfsame moment fly.
And the lance of Sarpedon smote on the midst of the neck of his foe,
And onward and out beyond did the bitter spear-head go:
And over the eyes of Tlepolemus blackness of darkness swept.
But into the thigh of Sarpedon his lance long-shafted leapt.
Onward the furious point of it rushed through the quivering limb,
Grazing the bone, but his sire still warded destruction from him.
Then from the midst of the battle his hero-comrades bore
Sarpedon the godlike, the while the long spear burdened him sore
As it trailed; yet no man marked it, and none took thought for his plight,



To draw from his thigh the spear, to the end he might stand upright,
Mid their haste—such labour they had for his help mid the tangle of fight.
Out of the battle the while did the mailed Achaians bring
Tlepolemus slain, and Odysseus beheld that evil thing,
Odysseus the steadfast-hearted, and stirred was his spirit with pain;
And the thoughts and intents of his mind for a space were divided in twain,
Whether first to pursue that sore-hurt son of the Thunder-lord,
Or to fall on the Lycians left, and to smite with the edge of the sword.
But not for Odysseus the mighty-souled did the Fates ordain
That the princely scion of Zeus should be by his keen brass slain:
Therefore Athênê turned his wrath on the Lycian array.
Alastor, and Koiranus, Chromius there did the hero slay;
Alkander and Halius withal, and Noêmon and Prytanis died:—
Yea, godlike Odysseus had slain full many a Lycian beside,
But Hector Lightning-helm's keen glance that havoc espied.
Through the forefront of battle in harness of flame-bright brass did he stride,
Bringing fear on the Danaans: then was the child of Zeus full fain
Of his coming, and faintly gasped Sarpedon amidst of his pain:
"Forsake me not, offspring of Priam, to lie the Danaans' prey!
But save me: content were I that my life should pass away,
So it be but within your city:—I know that mine eyes shall see
Never again mine home, nor the land that fostered me,
Nor the welcoming smile of my wife, nor my babe in its wordless glee."
So spake he, but Hector the splendour-helmeted answered him not;
But he rushed on past to the fight, for his heart was vengeance-hot

To be hurling the Argives back, and to heap their carcases there.
Then did his hero-companions Sarpedon the godlike bear
From the fight unto Zeus the Aegis-wielder's oak-tree green.
Then forth of his wounded thigh the ashen javelin keen
Did goodly Pelagon thrust, the friend right dear unto him.
Then fainted his spirit; his failing eyes with a mist grew dim.
Howbeit again he revived when the North-wind's cool fresh breath
Fanned him, and quickened his soul as it swooned at the gates of death.
Now the Argives, when Arês and Hector the brass-mailed charged their array,
Turned not their faces to flee to the black-hulled galleys away;
Neither rushed they forward to battle, but backward still gave ground
So soon as they knew that the War-god amidst of the Trojans was found.
 Who then was the first, and who was the last in the red dust laid
By Hector the child of Priam, and Arês the brass-arrayed?
Teuthras the godlike, Orestes the war-steed-smiter withal
And Trêchus Aetolia's spearman, and there Oinomaus fall,
And Helenus Oinopus' son, and Oresbius taslet-gleaming,
Who in Hylê abode, with his heart of his wealth's increase aye dreaming,
Of his cornfields aslope to the mere of Kephisus, and round them there
The farms of the folk of Boeotia, the fruitful land and fair.
 Now when Hêrê the ivory-wristed Goddess beheld these two,
How in the wild death-grapple the Argive men they slew,
Straightway she turned to Athênê, and sped the winged word-flight:
 "Out on it, child of the Aegis-wielder, unwearied Might!
Good sooth, unto Lord Menelaus our promise was spoken in vain



That Ilium should perish or ever he gat him home again,
If we suffer that Arês the baleful shall thus rage unrestrained!
Up, let our prowess awaken, the storm of our wrath be unreined!"
She spake, and the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed hearkened her rede.
And to harness her golden-frontleted horses hied her with speed
Hêrê the Goddess, the Queen, great Kronos' glorious seed.
Swift on the brazen wheels laid Hêbê the chariot-seat;
Twice four be the brazen spokes on the axle of steel that meet;
And the felloe that claspeth the same, it is wrought of unperishing gold;
And of brass be the tires close-lapping,—a marvel they are to behold;—
And of silver the naves thereof swift-whirling on either hand;
And the seat of the car with many a gold and silver band
Is plaited; and two be the chariot-rails that encompass it round.
And the pole is of silver withal: on the end thereof she bound
The golden yoke, and with golden traces she hung it about,
Most fair: and forth to the yoke were the fleetfoot steeds led out
Of Hêrê furious-fain of the strife and the onset-shout.
But Athênê the child of the Aegis-wielder, the Lord of Thunder,
Cast down on her father's threshold her mantle's woven wonder,
The rainbow-broidered robe of her own hands' fashioning;
And she did on her body the tunic of Zeus the Cloudrack-king,
And in harness of tear-drenched battle her mighty limbs arrayed.
Over her shoulders the terrible tasselled aegis she laid;
Around it in serpent-coilings enwreathed is Terror rolled,
Strife, Valour, the onset-yell that maketh the blood run cold

Are therein, and the Gorgon-head, the unspeakable monstrous thing,
The ghastly, the fearful marvel of Zeus the Aegis-king.
And the helmet twofold-crested of fourfold plate did she don,
Of gold, with the hosts of a hundred cities emblazoned thereon.
And grasping her spear she hath stepped on the chariot that flameth as fire,—
With her huge spear, massy and strong; for the Child of a Mighty Sire
Quelleth therewith whole ranks of the heroes that kindle her ire.
Swiftly hath Hêrê uplifted the scourge, and the steeds doth she lash.
Self-moving the gates of Heaven spring wide with a thunder-crash,
Whose warders the Hours be, to whom is the charge of Olympus given,
To open or shut the rift in the cloud-built rampart of Heaven.
On through the portals the steeds fair-heeding the goad have they driven.
And they came on the son of Kronos sitting apart from the rest
Of the Gods, upon myriad-ridged Olympus' topmost crest.
Then Hêrê the ivory-wristed Goddess her horses stayed,
And she questioned of Zeus most high, the offspring of Kronos, and said:
"Allfather, art thou not indignant for Arês' deeds of bane,
How great and how goodly a host of Achaians his fury hath slain
Recklessly, lawlessly? Anguish is mine!—but careless the while
Apollo Silverbow and the Cyprian triumphantly smile.
They have hounded a mad fiend on who knoweth nor justice nor right.
Allfather, wilt thou be enkindled to wrath against me, if I smite,
If I chase this Arês afar from the battle in pitiful plight?"
And Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper made answer to Hêrê again:
"Haste thee—uprouse thou against him Athênê the War-fiend's bane,

The Prey-giver, mightiest in making him taste of bitterest pain."

So spake he, and Hêrê the white-armed Goddess gave heed thereto;
And she touched the steeds with the lash, and with eager speed they flew
In the midst between earth and the stars on the pavement of heaven that burn.
And far as a man with his eyes through the sea-line-haze may discern,
On a cliff as he sitteth and gazeth away o'er the wine-dark deep,
So far at a bound do the loud-neighing steeds of the Deathless leap.
So they came to the land of Troy and her rivers that seaward run,
To the place where Skamander and Simoïs blend their streams in one.
There stayed she the horses, Hêrê the Queen of the ivory wrist;
From the car she unyoked them, and round them she hung deep folds of mist:
And lo, for their meat with ambrosia did Simoïs' banks blush bright.
Then the Goddesses hied them, as doves soft-gliding in soundless flight,
To the help of the Argives, furious-fain for their battle-aid.
And so when they came unto where their most and their best were arrayed,
Where shoulder to shoulder around Diomedes the hero they stood,
Grim-showing as ravening lions whose jaws are bedabbled with blood,
Or like to the beasts of tameless fury, the boars of the wood,
There Hêrê the white-armed stood, and rang through the battle her cry—
As great-heart Stentor the brazen-voiced seemed she to the eye,
For his shout was the shout of fifty men: so shouted she:—

"Shame on you, Argives, ye bywords! dastards goodly to see!
So long as Achilles the godlike went forth to the battle with you,
Never was Trojan that stepped the gates Dardanian through;
For they dreaded the lightning-gleam of his terrible-storming spear:

But now from the city afar by the ships fight they without fear!" [cried.
Then their courage was kindled, their souls were aflame for the word that she
And Athênê the grey-eyed sprang to the son of Tydeus' side.
By his chariot and horses she found him, the lord of battle-craft,
Cooling the burning wound that was dealt by Pandarus' shaft:
For sorely the toil-sweat galled it by reason of that broad band
That bare up the orb of his shield, and aweary grew his hand.
He was lifting the baldric, and wiping the dark-hued blood away,
When the Goddess laid her hand on the yoke, and thus did she say:
"Ah, not as the sire is the son of Tydeus' loins that came!
Little of stature was Tydeus, but mighty in battle-fame.
Yea, once I commanded him saying 'Take heed that thou fight with none,
Nor defiantly bear thee,' when aidless he came unto Thebes and alone,
On an ambassage unto the host of the princes of Kadmus' race.
'Sit thou at the meat in quiet,' I said, 'in the feastful place.'
But he bare, as in days overpast, the soul that never quailed;
And he challenged the princes of Thebes, and in whatso he strove, he prevailed
Full lightly: so present a helper was I unto him that day.
But for thee—of a surety I stand by thy side, and I guard alway,
And with all mine heart I command thee to fight with the Trojan foe.
But thy limbs be faint and weary with rushing to and fro,
Or spiritless terror hath gotten thee. Surely if that be so,
No son of the warrior Tydeus thou art, nor of Oineus' line."
Spake Diomedes the strong, and he answered the lips divine:
"I know thee, Goddess, daughter of Zeus the Aegis-lord:



Wherefore my strait will I tell, neither hide in mine heart the word.
No spiritless terror is this, neither slackness that holdeth mine hand ;
But mindful am I of thy charge, and I heed thine own command.
For thou saidst that I should not in conflict against the Blessèd stand :
Save only if Aphroditê the daughter of Zeus should pass
Into battle, I should not spare her, but smite with the keen-whetted brass.
Wherefore I now give ground myself, and the Argives all
Have I bidden to gather close for a steadfast battle-wall :
For mine eyes have discerned yon Arês triumphantly swaying the fray."
 Unto him made answer Athênê, and thus did the Grey-eyed say :
" Diomedes, thou joy of mine heart, O Tydeus' hero-son,
Fear thou not Arês for this ;—I say unto thee, fear none
Of the Deathless, so present a helper am I unto thee in thy need.
Come then, against Arês the first thy battle-tramplers speed.
Close with him, smite him, the wild-heart, and be not at all dismayed
For the mad fiend Arês, the curse from his birth, the renegade,
Who but yesterday spake unto me and to Hêrê, and pledged him to aid
The Argive host, and withal to strive against Troy in the war :
But now he consorteth with Trojans ; forgotten the Argives are."
 Then thrust she Sthenelus down to the earth from the chariot-seat,
Drawing him back ; and he leapt from the car with eager feet.
Then into the chariot beside Diomedes mounted she,
The battle-fain Goddess : and groaned the oaken axletree,
With the weight of a Goddess dread and a hero heavy-fraught.
And the whip and the reins in her hands hath Pallas Athênê caught.

Forthright against Arês first those thundering hoofs she sped.
Even then was he stripping the mail from giant Periphas dead,
Aetolia's mightiest champion, Ochesius' goodly son.
Him was the Blood-fiend spoiling: then did Athênê don
The helmet of Hades, to hide her from terrible Arês' eye.
And Earth-curse Arês looked, and beheld Diomedes anigh.
Forthright he forsook gigantic Periphas there as he lay
On the spot where first he had slain him and torn his life away;
And straight on the tamer of horses he rushed, Diomedes the strong.
So anigh to each other they came, flashing forth from the battle-throng.
First over the yoke and the reins of the horses Arês thrust
With his lance of brass, mad-eager to bring down his life in the dust.
But the Goddess Athênê the Grey-eyed the lance in her hand hath ta'en,
And up from the chariot hath thrust it to spend its fury in vain.
Then Diomedes the battle-helper drave at his foe
With his brass-headed spear, and onward Athênê sped the blow
Even to the place where the taslet girded his loins, and there
Lighted the point of the lance, and through the fair skin tare.
Then backward he plucked the spear, and brazen Arês yelled.
Louder the onset-cry of thousands nine ne'er swelled,
Nor of thousands ten, when they charge mad-kindled with battle-delight.
And trembling gat hold on Achaians and Trojans, and sore affright,
So mighty, so hideous the yell was of Arês insatiate of fight.
As the darkness in heaven when blackens a lurid thundercloud,
When past is the burning heat, and the winds blow fierce and loud,



So Arês the brazen in Tydeus' son Diomedes' eyes
Seemed, as he fled amid clouds to the broad-o'erarching skies.
And with speed to the home of the Gods, to the steep of Olympus, he won,
And in anguish of soul sat down by King Zeus, Kronos' son.
And he showed the immortal blood as adown from the wound it ran ;
And the winged words moaned from his lips as in pitiful voice he began :
" Allfather, art thou not indignant for violence wrought in thy sight?
Evermore have the Gods tribulation and horror of mischief and spite
At the hands of their fellows, when fain we would bless the children of earth.
With thee are we all at feud : thou gavest yon mad maid birth,
The destroyer, whose thoughts evermore be of lawless deeds and fell.
For the rest of the Gods, even we in the halls of Olympus that dwell,
Unto thee bow down in subjection, and all thy behests do we heed ;
But her—thou hast never rebuked her, never in word nor in deed ;
But thou lettest her be, for thyself hast begotten this pestilent child,
Who hath hounded on but now Diomedes the outrage-wild
Even on Gods everliving to rush in his fury accurst ;
For the Cyprian Queen in the hand at the wrist hath he wounded first,
Thereafter on me, even me, like a God in his anger he burst.
But my feet swift-flying delivered me, else long time had I lain
Suffering anguish there midst the ghastly heaps of the slain,
Or had lived on strengthless-stricken by stabs of the brazen lance."
Made answer the Cloudrack-sweeper, with stern and scornful glance :
" Sit not, thou renegade, making thy whimpering moan at my side!
Most hateful thou art unto me of the Gods in Olympus that bide.

Dear unto thee evermore is contention and battle and blood.
Thine is thy mother's unbearable spirit, the stubborn mood
Of Hêrê, for hardly her wild self-will by my words may I rein.
By her were they moved, I trow, that dealt unto thee this pain.
Howbeit I will not endure that thy pangs shall be long upon thee,
Seeing thou art the son of my loins, and thy mother bare thee to me.
But if any beside of the Gods were thy father, thou ruinous bane,
Lower than Uranus' sons long since thine head had lain."

Then he bade Paiaion the Healer for Arês' help draw nigh:
And pain-quelling salves on the wound did the Leech-god spread, whereby
He restored him, for not as the deathlings he was, that be born but to die.
And as fig-juice hasteth to turn white milk to a sudden curd,
That the thin-flowing standeth in clots when scarce by the hand it is stirred,
So Arês the wild-heart's blood-flow changed into flesh forthright.
And Hêbê bathed him, and clothed him in garments radiant-bright:
And by Zeus Kronion he sat him adown, in pride of his might.

Then came they aback, those twain, unto great Zeus' palace-hall,
Hêrê of Argos, Alalkomenean Athênê withal,
Having stayed fell Arês the Earth-curse from manslaying battle-brawl.

BOOK VI.

How Andromachê, Hector's wife, took her last farewell of the hero.

SO left unto menfolk was Troy and Achaia's terrible war:
And hither and thither the battle-rush swayed o'er the plain evermore,
And from host unto host ever lightened the lances' brazen gleam
In the land that lieth between Skamander and Simoïs stream.
It was Aias, Achaia's bulwark, Telamon's son, that first
Brought victory-light to his men, and the Trojan war-ranks burst,
When his spear-cast made the Thracians' mightiest champion fall,
Akamas son of Eussôrus, a warrior stalwart and tall.
On the ridge of his heavily-crested helm did the javelin light,
And into his forehead it plunged, for the brazen head flame-bright
Burst through the bone, and the death-mist shrouded his eyes with night.
Diomedes the battle-helper hurled Axylus down,
Teuthranus' son, who dwelt in Arisbê the fair-built town,
A mighty man of wealth, and the needy blessed his name,
For he dwelt by the highway, and welcomed with guest-cheer whoso came.

Yet was there none of them all to thrust himself that day
'Twixt him and the bitter death, but both did Tydeides slay,
Both him and his henchman Kalesius, the man into battle that drave [grave.
The steeds of his chariot: and these twain passed through the gates of the
Then were Opheltius and Dresus low by Euryalus laid:
Pedasus then and Aisêpus he chased, whom the Fountain-maid
Abarbareê had borne to Bukolion years agone:
Now Bukolion the comely was sprung from the haughty Laomedon.
In birth was he first of his sons, but was born of a maid unwed:
And he met that nymph in the days when his flock to the pasture he led.
So the Naiad conceived by the love of the shepherd, and twin sons bare:
But the strength of their glorious limbs was unstrung in the battle there
By Mekisteus' son, and their harness of war from their shoulders he tare.
Polypoites the battle-bider hath stricken Astyalus down:
By the lance of Odysseus Pidytes, a lord of Perkotê-town,
Unto Hades was sped: by Teucer the stout Aretaon is slain:
And the glittering spear of Antilochus Nestor's son is the bane
Of Ablerus; and King Agamemnon in death laid Elatus low.
On Pedasus' height, where Satnioeis' fair waters flow,
He abode. Then Lêitus smote down Phylakus fast as he fled:
And now hath the hand of Eurypylus laid Melanthius dead.
Menelaus the battle-helper Adrestus alive hath ta'en;
For his horses stumbled, as raging with terror they scoured the plain,
On the branch of a tamarisk shrub, and the pole of the curvèd car
They snapped off short, and away to the city they galloped afar

On the path whereby the others in panic were fleeing fast:
But their lord from the chariot-seat to the earth by the wheel was cast.
Down on his face in the dust hath he fallen: then to his side
With spear uplifted did Atreus' son Menelaus stride:
But Adrestus embraced his knees, and besought him with passionate cries:
"Take me alive, O Atreus' son, for the ransom-price!
Rich is my father: his chambers with manifold treasures be fraught;
There lieth the brass, and the gold is there, and the iron huge-wrought;
And my father would lavish thereof, he would nowise count the cost,
If he heard that alive I lay mid the ships of the Danaan host."
So spake he, and moved was his spirit to hear that suppliant plead;
And now had he straightway given him in charge to his henchman, to lead
To the swift Achaian ships,—but another thrust before,
For thitherward ran Agamemnon, and chode with his brother sore:
"Soft-heart Menelaus!—and why dost thou take such tender thought
Of the foe? Shall it be because of the marvellous kindness wrought [doom
To thine house by the Trojans?—Let none of them 'scape from the swift sheer
To be dealt by our hands, no, not the babe in the mother's womb,
So it be but a manchild: it shall not escape; let all the race
Of Ilium utterly perish, and leave on the earth no trace."
So spake he, and turned from ruth, forasmuch as he counselled aright,
His brother: his heart was hardened, his hand thrust back from his sight
Adrestus: deep in his flank did the lord Agamemnon smite.
Backward he fell; on his breast his heel did Atreides set,
And the ashen spear drew forth with his heart's blood ruddy-wet.

Then Nestor cried to the Argives, and sent his voice afar:
"Friends, Danaan heroes, henchmen of Arês the Lord of War!
Let none take thought for the plunder, to tarry behind from the fray,
Thinking to bear to the galleys the goodlier burden of prey,
But slaughter the foe: thereafter in peace shall ye gather the spoil,
When over the plain wide-strewn is the fruit of your battle-toil."
So spake he, and kindled their courage, their hearts were mightily moved:
And again the Trojans before the Achaians Arês-beloved
Into Ilium had fled, for their hearts were faint, and their hands hung down;
But lo, to Aeneas and Hector a seer of peerless renown
Came, Helenus, Priam's son, and with eager lips did he say:
"Aeneas and Hector, ye be the mightiest battle-stay
Of the Trojan and Lycian hosts, for the chief of our strength be ye
For devising of battle or counsel, whatso our need may be.
Stand therefore, and here in front of the gates shall ye pass through the host,
And rally the warfolk, or ever their manhood be utterly lost,
And they flee to the arms of their wives mid the foemen's scorn and joy.
But when ye have roused up again to the battle the ranks of Troy,
Here will we bide, and against the Danaans' onslaught stand,
How wearied soever, for heavily presseth necessity's hand.
But, Hector, go thou hence to the city, and speak in the ears
Of thy mother and mine: let her gather the women stricken in years
To the citadel, even the fane of Athênê the flashing-eyed.
With her key let her open the holy doors, and fling them wide.
Let the robe most fair in her eyes, and whose folds the amplest fall,



Even that which she cherisheth most of the treasures that shine in her hall,
On the knees of Athênê the lovely-tressed be laid by her hand;
Therewithal let her vow twelve kine at the Goddess's altar to stand,
Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if in mercy she will but spare
Troy-town, and the wives and the helpless babes that be sheltered there,
If so be she will turn back from Ilium the holy Tydeus' child,
The stalwart panic-wafter, the hero tameless-wild,
Who hath proved him the mightiest man of all the Achaians, I trow;
Yea, not even Achilles the war-lord daunted us so,
Though they name him the Goddess-born, for this man in fury of fight
Is filled with exceeding madness, that none may match his might."
So did he counsel, and Hector disdained not his brother's rede.
Down from his chariot he leapt to the ground in battle-weed,
And brandishing keen-whetted lances he ranged the host about,
Cheering them on, and he kindled the terrible onset-shout.
Then turned they, and rallied, and met the Achaians face to face:
And the Argive men gave back, and from slaughter refrained for a space; [sky
For it seemed them that one of the Deathless had come from the star-studded
Down to the help of the Trojans, they rallied so dauntlessly.
And Hector shouted aloud down the ranks of the Trojans' war:
"Great-hearted Trojans, and ye of our war-aid famous afar,
Quit you like men, my friends, and forget not your onset-fire,
The while unto Ilium I go, and to elder and council-sire
I speak, and withal to our wives in the battle-guarded home,
To put up their prayers to the Gods, and to vow them a hecatomb."

So shouted the bright-helmed Hector, and fast from the field did he stride,
While clashed against ankle and neck the round of the dark bull-hide,
The rim that encompassed his boss-set buckler on every side.
Then Glaukus, Hippolochus' seed, and the son of Tydeus' might
'Twixt army and army met, full fain of the grapple of fight.
Onward the heroes came till now they were drawn full nigh:
Then first did the battle-helper, the lord Diomedes, cry:
"Mightiest, who of the deathling children of men art thou?
For never I marked thee in glory-crowning battle ere now.
But in front of the rest this day for a champion forth hast thou stood
Biding my long-shadowed spear in thy desperate hardihood.
They be children of heart-stricken parents that brave my battle-mood.
But and if thou be one of the Deathless Ones come down from the sky,
Of a truth I will nowise fight with the Gods, the abiders on high.
For in sooth to the offspring of Dryas, Lycurgus the strong, were there given
Few days on the earth, forasmuch as he strove with the dwellers in heaven.
For the nymphs that nursed Dionysus, the frenzy-glorious child,
He hunted adown Nyseion the holy, and terror-wild
Cast they their wands to the earth, by Lycurgus the murderer chased
With his goad fierce-smiting, the while Dionysus in panic-struck haste
Plunged in the sea-wave, and Thetis upreached her arms from below,
And her breast was his refuge as sorely he quaked at the threats of his foe.
But for this cause wroth were the Gods, the abiders in bliss unmarred,
And Kronion with blindness smote him: the days of the evil-starred
Were few, for that all the Deathless accounted him cursed in their sight.



—Nay, with the Gods bliss-throned would I nowise adventure the fight.
But and if thou be one of the children of men that of earth-fruit eat,
Draw nigh, that the toils of the doom-net the sooner may snare thy feet."

Answered Hippolochus' glorious son, and thus spake he:
"Tydeides the mighty-hearted, what is my lineage to thee?
Even as the frail generations of leaves be the lives of men.
These leaves on the earth by the wind be scattered: with those again
Doth the woodland bourgeon and bloom, when stirreth the spring in the spray:
So this generation of men springeth up, that passeth away.
Yet if thou wouldst learn this, hearken, and so shalt thou know full well
Our lineage—good sooth, full many the tale thereof could tell!
In the heart of Argos there lieth the city of Ephyrê.
There Sisyphus dwelt: most crafty of all men on earth was he;—
Sisyphus Aiolus' scion;—and Glaukus was born his son;
And Glaukus thereafter begat the princely Bellerophon.
And beauty and lovely manhood the high Gods gave unto him.
But Proitus devised his bane, and his thoughts were vengeful-grim.
Therewithal was he mightier far, so he drave him forth of the land
Of the Argives; for Zeus had subdued the people under his hand.
Now the wife of Proitus, Anteia the fair, in her mad lust sought
To be joined in secret embrace with the prince: yet nowise she wrought
The upright of heart to her will, Bellerophon virtuous-wise;
Wherefore she spake unto Proitus the king a tale of lies:
'Thou art worthy, O Proitus, to die, if thou spill not Bellerophon's life,
Who hath tempted in vain, and thereafter was fain to have forced thy wife.'

So spake she, and wroth for the story of shame was the heart of the king:
Yet he shrank from his blood, for it seemed to his soul an unholy thing.
But to Lycia he sent him, and baleful tokens he gave him to bear,
A folded tablet, with many a death-fraught sign traced there:
And he bade show this to the sire of Anteia, that so he might die.
So he fared unto Lycia, brought on his way by the Gods most high.
And he came to the land where the waters of Xanthus swiftly glide;
There welcome and worship he had of the lord of Lycia the wide.
Nine days did he banquet his guest, nine oxen he slew for the feast:
But when on the tenth the Dawn rose-fingered brightened the east,
Then did he question the prince, and would fain behold the sign,
The token of him that had wedded the child of his royal line.
So he looked on the murder-token: then bade he Bellerophon first
To slay the Chimaira, the waster resistless, the horror accurst.
God-fashioned it was, not gendered of men: a lion before,
And to rearward a dragon, the midst a she-goat's semblance bore;
And the breath of her mouth was the terrible fury of ravening flame.
Nathless he slew her, obeying the signs from the Gods that came.
Then went he forth to the fray with the Solymi war-renowned,
And ever he named it the mightiest fight that his hands had found.
Then smote he the host of the Amazons, battle-peers of men.
But the snare was spread in the way as homeward he hied him again.
For the king out of Lycia chose him her mightiest men of war,
And he set them in ambush: but never returned they home any more,
For every man of the traitors peerless Bellerophon slew.



And the eyes of the king were opened, the god-born hero he knew.
Then said he, 'Abide thou with me: lo, I plight thee my child for thy bride,
And I give thee the half of my kingdom, the glory of Lycia the wide.'
And the people gave of their land, a matchless-fair domain,
Goodly with vineyard and orchard and golden-rippling grain.
And the wife of the wise Bellerophon bare to him children fair,
Isander, Hippolochus, Laodameia moreover she bare.
With Laodameia Zeus the Lord of Counsel lay,
And her child was Sarpedon the godlike, who flasheth in brass-array.
But it came to pass that the high Gods hated Bellerophon,
And over the desolate plain of Aleion he wandered alone
Devouring his heart, and shunning the ways that menfolk trod.
And Isander, his son, of Arês the carnage-insatiate God
In battle against the Solymi war-renowned was slain.
And his daughter was smitten of Artemis Queen of the Silver Rein.
But my father Hippolochus was, yea, I name me of noblest strain;
And he sent me to Troy, and he earnestly charged me once and again
Ever upward to strive to the highest, and still to be best of the best,
And to shame not the line of my sires, who were ever the princeliest
Of the princely of Ephyrê-town and of Lycia-land the wide.
Lo, this is my lineage, and this is my blood, and herein is my pride."
Then Diomedes the battle-helper rejoiced to hear;
And into the all-sustaining earth he thrust his spear;
And with words of peace he cried to the shepherd of Lycia's fold:
"Surely my friend art thou, for our fathers were friends of old!

In the halls of Oineus the godlike a noble guest of yore,
Even Bellerophon, tarried through feastful days a score.
Yea, each to the other they gave fair gifts on the parting day:
A sword-belt Oineus gave bright-dyed with the purple gay;
And a double-chalice cup of gold Bellerophon gave.
I left the same in mine halls when I sailed the dark sea-wave.
But Tydeus my sire I remember not, for a babe was I
When he left me, and fared unto Thebes with the host of Achaia—to die.
Wherefore thy bond-friend am I in the midst of Argos mine home,
And thou in Lycia mine, whensoe'er to their land I shall come.
Even in the turmoil of battle each other's spears will we shun:
I shall find full many a Trojan, and allies many an one
To slay, whom my feet shall o'ertake, or a God shall deliver to me;
And for thee be Achaians enow, to smite as thy strength shall be.
And now will we make exchange of war-gear, that all men may know
That the troth of our fathers is ours, and the love of long-ago."

So spake they, and down from their chariots to earth they leapt, they twain;
And they clasped right hand in hand, and they plighted their troth again.
Lo how Kronion from Glaukus the world-wise heart hath ta'en!
For lightly he changeth his mail with the hero of Tydeus' line,
Giving golden for brazen, the price of a hundred beeves for nine.

Now when Hector was come to the Skaian gate and the oak by the wall,
Around him there ran the wives of Troy and the daughters withal.
And they asked him of sons and of brethren, of husbands and friends asked they.
But for all reply he spake unto each after other "Pray,



O pray to the Gods!"—and on many a heart death's shadow lay.
And when unto Priam's palace exceeding fair he came
With its gleaming marble of long colonnades,—and within the same
Were there fifty chambers fashioned of cunningly carven stone,
Chamber by chamber, an endless line; and every one
Was the bower where slumbered a son of the King with his princess-bride;
And overagainst them, even on the courtyard's farther side,
Twelve chambers of polished stone for the daughters of Priam there were,
Chamber by high-roofed chamber upbuilded; and slumbered there
The sons-in-law of the King with their wives, the chaste and fair:—
Then came his bountiful mother forth to meet her son,
With Laodikê, fairest of all her daughters to look upon:
And she clasped his hand in her own, and with eager words 'gan say:
"Son, why hast thou hitherward come from the desperate-daring fray?
Ah surely the sons of Achaia—the name accurst—press hard
Battling around us, and thee hath thy soul sped hitherward
To uplift from the citadel's height thine hands unto Zeus in prayer.
Nay, tarry a space, and the honey-sweet wine to thine hand will I bear,
To the end thou mayst pour unto Zeus and the Deathless enthroned above
First, and thereafter mayst strengthen thine heart, if thou drink thereof;
For that wine, when a man is forspent, doth exceedingly quicken his might,
Even as thou art forwearied defending thy friends in the fight."
Answered and spake great Hector the lord of the helm sun-bright:
"Nay, bring not the wine heart-gladdening, lady mother mine,
Lest thou maim me, and courage and strength be forgotten by reason of wine.

And with hands unwashen I dare not the flame-flashing wine outpour
Unto Zeus, it may nowise be that a man should stand and adore
Kronion the Cloudrack-clad all dabbled in filth and gore.
But thou to the temple of Pallas Athênê the Prey-giver fare:
With oblations go up; be the ancient women assembled there:
Let the robe most fair in thine eyes, and whose folds the amplest fall,
Even that which thou cherishest most of the treasures that shine in thine hall,
On the knees of Athênê the lovely-tressed be laid by thine hand;
Therewithal do thou vow twelve kine at the Goddess's altar to stand,
Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if in mercy she will but spare
Troy-town, and the wives and the helpless babes that be sheltered there;
If so be she will turn back from Ilium the holy Tydeus' child,
The stalwart panic-wafter, the hero tameless-wild.
Thou therefore fare to the fane of the Driver of the Prey,
And I will away unto Paris, to call him hence to the fray,
If perchance he will hearken my voice:—would God the earth straightway
Might ope for his grave—this curse raised up by the Lord of the Sky
That the Trojans might perish, and Priam and all his seed, thereby!
If I might but behold him passing adown unto Hades' abode,
I should deem that mine heart had forgotten its sorrow, and cast its load."
 Then hasted his mother, and gave command to the maids in her hall,
And they fared up and down through the city the ancient women to call.
But the Queen passed on, and now in her scented bower she stands:
There lay the broidery-glorious robes, the work of the hands
Of Sidonian women, brought far over the waters wide,

Even from Sidon, when Prince Alexander the godlike hied
On the sea-track fleeing with Helen, the mighty-fathered bride.
And from these for Athênê she taketh a lovely-woven pall;
Brightest its broideries shone, and its folds swept widest of all;
And it gleamed and it flashed as a star, mid her treasures the deepest it lay.
Then with the throng of the ancient women she hied her away.
So they came to the castled crag and Athênê's stately fane:
And Theano the fair-cheeked opened the doors for the suppliant train,—
The daughter of Kisseus, the wife of Antênor the horse-quelling lord;
For the Trojans had made her priestess, Athênê's temple-ward:—
And they lifted their hands to Athênê, and woeful-wild they shrieked;
And the priceless mantle she took, Theano the beautiful-cheeked;
On the knees of Athênê she laid it, the Maid of the glorious hair,
And she cried to the daughter of Zeus most high with vow and prayer:
"O Lady Athênê, City-deliverer, Queen of the Sky!
Break thou Diomedes' spear, vouchsafe that its lord may lie
In front of the Skaian gate in death outstretched on his face.
Then straight will we sacrifice twelve beeves in thine holy place,
Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if thou wilt but in ruth show grace
Unto Troy and her wives, and the innocent babe at the mother's breast."
So praying she spake, but Pallas Athênê denied the request.
Thus to the daughter of Zeus most high in prayer they cried.
But Hector on to the dwelling of Alexander hath hied,
The beautiful house that he built with them that in cunning of hand
Were the chiefest builder-craftsmen in all the Trojan land:

Yea, they fashioned it, bower and hall, and the garth encompassing,
On the castled steep, by the dwellings of Hector and Priam the king.
So Hector the Zeus-beloved passed in ; in his hands he bore
The lance of cubits eleven, and lightning leapt before
From the brazen head of the spear, and the gold that clasped it round.
There, setting in order his beautiful armour, the prince he found
Handling the shield and the corslet, the bow and the war-shafts keen :
And amidst of her handmaid-train sat Helen the Argive Queen ;
And lovely their fashionings were as the work of their hands she sped.
And Hector beheld and was wroth, and with words of scorn he said :
" Ho thou, what hast thou to do to nurse in thine heart this spite ?
Lo how the people be falling around the city in fight !
And for thee is the war-shout wakened, aflame is the battle for thee
These high-built ramparts around ;—thyself wouldst rage to see
Another that played the craven and shrank from the bitter fray.
Up, lest the city be wasted with ravening fire this day ! "
Answered and spake unto him Alexander the godlike wight :
" Hector, true be thy words, and thy chiding is meet and right :
Therefore the cause will I tell thee, hearken and understand :
It is not as for indignation or wrath with the folk of my land
That I sit in my chamber : but hands must tarry when heart is sore.
But now by her words hath my wife awakened mine heart unto war,
Soft-pleading—yea and myself I count it better so :—
Sooth, victory swayeth from man to man—I will meet my foe !
Go to now, tarry a space, till I don my war-array ;



Or go, and I follow: I ween thou shalt not win first to the fray."
So spake he, but Hector the bright-helmed answered him never a word.
Then lowly Helen spake to the Hero anger-stirred:
" O brother of me the shameless hound, the horror accurst,
Would God that on that same day when my mother beheld me first
The hurricane-blast of a wind of destruction had swooped upon me,
And borne to a mountain lone or the surge of the sighing sea!
Then ere these deeds had befallen the waters above me had rolled.
But seeing the Gods have ordained it, and fashioned our ills from of old,
Would God I had been but the wife of a nobler man, that could hear
The indignation-cry and the manifold heart-stinging jeer!
But he—no wisdom hath place in his heart, neither shall it be so
In the days to be; and the harvest thereof shall he reap, I trow.
But prithee come in, and here for a little sit down to rest,
O brother, for thine is the burden, the sorrow-darkened breast
For me the shameless hound, and for Alexander's sin,
Upon whom there is laid of Zeus an evil doom, to win
A mockery-song on the lips of the men of an unborn day."
Unto her did Hector the mighty, the splendour-morioned, say:
" Nay, Helen, no rest for me; in vain of thy love shalt thou plead;
For now is my spirit yearning to help the battle-need
Of the Trojans, for sorely they lack me who look for my face in vain.
But this man rouse thou—nay, of his own heart's will let him strain
That he fail not to overtake me ere forth of the city I fare;
For now to mine home will I pass to look on mine household there,

And my wife the well-beloved, and my son the innocent-fair.
For I know not if I shall hereafter return to behold them again,
Or if now of the Gods I be doomed by Achaia's sons to be slain."
Then forth went Hector, and vanished his helmet's wavering flame;
And unto his beautiful-builded house with speed he came.
Yet he found not Andromachê snowy-armed in hall or bower;
But she, with her child and a handmaid fair-attired, on a tower
Was standing the while, and she wailed in her anguish, and moaned in her fear.
So when Hector beheld not his queenly-noble wife anear,
To the hall of the women he strode, and he spake from the threshold-stone:
"Now tell me, my handmaids, and see that ye speak sheer truth alone:—
Whither away is Andromachê gone from mine halls this day?
To my sisters or fair-robed wives of my brethren went she away?
Or passed she up with the rest of the fair-tressed ones that hied
To Athênê's fane, if her anger might haply be pacified?"
Then to the hero a diligent stewardess-handmaid replied:
"Forasmuch as my lord hath commanded, requiring the truth of me,—
She hath gone not thy sisters or fair-robed wives of thy brethren to see,
Nor passed she up with the rest of the fair-tressed ones that hied
To Athênê's fane, if her anger might haply be pacified.
But now hath she climbed a huge-built tower, for she heard the tale
That the Trojans be sorely pressed, and the men of Achaia prevail.
For this cause hence to the wall hath she hasted terror-wild,
Like one distraught, and beside her the nurse went bearing the child."
So spake that stewardess-handmaid, and Hector with hurrying feet



Went back by the way that he came through street after fair-built street.
But when as he fared through the mighty city he came at the last
To the Skaian gate, and forth to the plain in a moment had passed,
Came running to meet him the wife that he won with gifts untold,
Even Andromachê child of Eëtion mighty-souled,—
Eëtion, who dwelt under Plakos dark with its forest-cloak,
In Thêbê the Plakos-shadowed, and ruled the Cilician folk;
Even he was the king whose daughter was brass-mailed Hector's bride;—
So met that lady her lord, and her handmaid came at her side
With the boy on her bosom, a wordless-prattling blossom of love,
Darling of Hector, like some fair star slid down from above:—
Skamandrius Hector named him, but all men called the son
Astyanax, for that Ilium's warder was Hector alone.
Then on the boy did the hero silently gaze and smile;
But Andromachê stood by his side, and her tears fell fast the while;
And clasping she clung to his hand, and she uttered her heart's sad thought:
"O husband, husband, thy courage will slay thee!—thou pitiest not
Thine helpless-innocent babe, and thy misery-fated wife
Who soon shall be widowed, for soon the Achaians shall spill thy life
All rushing upon thee as one, and better it were for me
Bereft of thee to be laid in the earth, for there never shall be
Any solace for this, when thou in the toils of doom shalt lie,
But anguish alone!—ah me, nor father nor mother have I!
For Achilles the godlike dealt my father the swift death-stroke,
And he utterly wasted the fair-built burg of Cilicia's folk,

Even Thêbê the lofty-gated, and smote Eëtion dead;
Yet he spoiled not his corse, for his spirit was strangely ashamed and adread.
In his war-gear curious-wrought did he burn him; a great earth-mound
Over his bones he heaped, and elms were planted around
By the Nymphs of the Mountain, the daughters of Zeus the Aegis-lord.
Seven brethren had I when our halls were unwasted yet of the sword;
And they passed all down into Hades' abode on the selfsame day,
For every one did fleetfoot Achilles the godlike slay
Amidst of their trailfoot kine and the flocks of their white-fleeced sheep.
And my mother, the queen of the town 'neath Plakos' wood-clad steep,
With his war-spoil hither he brought amidst of a captive train;
Yet for a measureless ransom he set her free again;
But she died in the halls of her father, by Artemis' arrow slain.
O Hector, Hector, my father art thou, and my mother withal,
And my brother—I have but thee, O husband stalwart and tall!
Have pity upon me, belovèd; abide thou here on the tower,
Lest thou orphan thy child, lest thou widow thy wife, in one short hour.
Stay thou the host by the fig-tree: there might a foeman fall
Best on the city, and lightliest there might scale her wall.
There twice the Aiantes twain with the best of their war-array,
And twice Idomeneus battle-renowned, have made assay,
And the war-folk of Atreus' sons, and of Tydeus' mighty seed;
Whether it were that they hearkened therein to a soothsayer's rede,
Or their own war-wisdom and courage pricked them on to the deed."
And Hector the mighty, the splendour-helmeted, answered and said:



" Yea, wife, all this do I also remember ; but sorely I dread
Troy's sons, and her scornful daughters royally-robed, and the sneer
Of the lips that will mock if I shrink from the war as in craven fear.
And mine own soul crieth against it, for have not I learned evermore
To stand in the forefront of fight, and to play the man in the war,
Winning renown for the name of my father, yea, and mine own ?
For of this is mine heart assured, to mine inmost soul is it known :
The day wherein Ilium the holy shall perish will come, it is near
Unto Priam withal, and the folk of the king of the ashen spear.
Yet it is not the grief that shall come on the Trojans that moveth me so,
Nor yet is mine heart so heavy for Priam and Hekabê's woe,
Nor yet for my brethren, the many and valiant, that low in the dust [thrust,
Shall fall, whom the hands of their foes through the gates of the grave shall
As for thee, when a mail-clad Achaian to bondage shall lead thee away
Weeping, and take from thine eyes the light of freedom's day ;
And in Argos my darling shall weave at another's behest, and bring
The pitcher at dawn from Messêis or Hypereia's spring
Sore loth—but the yoke of resistless constraint o'er thy neck shall be cast :
And thus shall they say, as their hard eyes watch thy tears flow fast :
' Lo, this is the wife of Hector, the chiefest in battle-renown
Of the horse-quelling Trojans in days when they warred round Ilium-town.'
So shall they speak : on thy soul at my name new anguish shall fall
With aching of heart for thy hero, thy shield from the lot of the thrall.
But me may the grave-mound cover, the earth my dead face veil
Or ever I hear thy shriek, and thine enthralment's tale."

So spake he, and Hector the glorious stretched his arms to his son:
But back to the fair-girt nurse's bosom the little one
Shrank crying aloud, at the face of his father sudden-adread,
In affright at the glittering brass with the dark mane overshed,
For awful it seemed in his eyes overglooming the helmet's light.
Then loving father and queenly mother laughed at the sight.
But Hector the glorious took the helm from his head forthright,
And he set on the earth at his feet that beacon-flame of fight.
And he took up his child in his arms. and he kissed him, and tossed him on high:
Therewithal unto Zeus and the rest of the Gods in prayer did he cry:
"O Zeus and the rest of the Gods, vouchsafe that this child of mine
May, even as I, mid the Trojans in glory-pre-eminence shine,
So valiant in prowess, and sit in his might upon Ilium's throne,
Till the people shall say, 'The father is far by the son outdone!'
As he cometh from war; and the slaughtered foemen's spoils blood-dyed
May he bear, that the heart of his mother may swell with joy and pride."
As he spake, in the arms of his dear-loved wife he laid his child;
And she in her fragrant bosom received her darling, and smiled,
Smiled through her tears, and her husband beheld her pity-stirred,
And with kind love-lingering touch did he soothe her, and spake the word:
"Nay, break not thine heart, my beloved, with sorrow over-great;
For no man shall hurl me adown unto Hades against my fate.
But I ween there is none that may flee from the doom ordained at his birth,
Nor the craven, nor yet the valiant, when once he is born on the earth.
But thou, enter into the house, to the labours of woman give heed,



To the toils of the spindle and loom, and command thy maidens to speed
Their tasks, but for war shall the men take thought, and for these shall it be,
Even all that in Ilium abide, and chiefest of all for me."

So spake he, and Hector the glorious his helm from the earth hath ta'en,
Dark-maned: and his dear-loved wife hath hied her homeward again,
Oft looking back, while fell her tears like the winter rain.
And it was so, that when she was come to the mansion builded fair
Of the slayer of heroes, she found the throng of her handmaids there;
And her mourning hath shaken their hearts, and awakened the wail of their grief:
Yea, in his halls, while he lived, were they wailing for Hector the chief;
For they deemed he would never come back from the midst of the battle again,
Escaped from the might and the hands of the strong Achaian men.

Nor lingered Paris long 'neath his hall-roof's stately height;
But so soon as he donned his war-gear with brass all cunningly dight,
Through the city he sped in the pride of his swift feet bounding light.
As a stallion manger-fed that hath snapped his halter in twain,
And speedeth with thunder of galloping feet far over the plain
To plunge, as so oft he hath plunged, in the river lovely-gleaming,
Exulting; and proudly he beareth his head, and his mane outstreaming
Floateth his shoulders around, as in pride of his goodlihead
By swift knees borne to the pastures and herds of the mares he hath sped;
So Paris the son of Priam adown from Pergamus' height,
In his war-gear flashing like to the sun that walketh in light,
Went laughing for glee, by his swift feet borne, till he came at the last
Unto Hector his brother: a moment more, and the hero had passed



From the place where husband and wife their uttermost love-word spoke.
And the prince Alexander the godlike cried to the captain of folk:
"Of a surety the feet of the laggard have hindered the haste of my lord,
And I came not in season due, according to that thy word."
Made answer and spake to him Hector the hero of helm-crest bright:
"Fair sir, there is no man on earth, the thoughts of whose heart be right,
Who would lightly esteem thy prowess in battle, for stalwart thou art:
Nay, thou art wilful-slack, and thou wilt not play thy part:
And stung is mine inmost soul with the words of reviling and scorn
Of the Trojans, of whom for thy sake such manifold toils be borne.
On then!—we will yet make atonement for all, if Zeus of his grace
Will grant that unto the Heaven-abiders, the deathless race,
In our halls we may raise up the cup of thanksgiving for freedom's day
What time we have chased the Achaians from Troyland far away."



BOOK VII.

How Aias man against man did battle with Hector the godlike.

SO spake he, and Hector the glorious rushed through the gate straightway:
Sped with him the prince Alexander his brother; full fain were they
Of the onset, the souls of them both were afire for the joy of the fray.
As to shipmen whose hearts for his coming have fainted a God hath sent
A breeze, when with tugging the oars smooth-shaven their strength is spent
Smiting the sea, and their limbs are fordone with weariness-pain;
So to Trojans whose hearts for their coming had fainted appeared these twain.
Then slew Alexander a prince of Arnê's royal race,
Menesthius, born to Arêïthoüs of the iron mace
Of Philomedusa the lovely-eyed, fair Arnê's queen:
Hurled Hector at Eïoneus with his long lance bitter-keen;
Through his neck 'neath the rim of the helmet it plunged, and his strength fled away.
Then Glaukus the son of Hippolochus, captain of Lycia's array,
Smote Iphinoüs with his javelin amidst of the mighty fray,—
Dexius' son, as he leapt on the car by his swift mares drawn,—



On the shoulder, and dashed him to earth, and the strength of his limbs was gone.

And it was so, when grey-eyed Athênê the Goddess beheld these twain
Smiting the Argive men in the battle's desperate strain,
That she leapt from Olympus' brow, and adown to the earth hath she darted:
Unto Ilium the holy she sped. But to meet her Apollo upstarted
From Pergamus' height, for his heart on the help of the Trojans was set.
And face to face by the oak the God and the Goddess met.
Then first did the Zeus-begotten, the king Apollo, cry:
"Wherefore again in thy fury, O daughter of Zeus most high,
Hast thou come from Olympus, and why hath thy great heart sped thy flight?
Is it so, that thou longest to give to the Danaans victory-might,
Forasmuch as thou hast no pity for all these Trojans slain?
But and if thou wouldst hearken to me, sure this would be more for thy gain—
Now make we their warfare to cease, and give we the battle breath
For to-day, thereafter again shall they fight, till the goal of death
For Ilium be won, forasmuch as this is the heart's desire
Of the Queens of the Deathless, to waste yon city with sword and fire."

And to him the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed made reply:
"Yea, so shall it be, Far-darter; for this cause down from the sky
From the height of Olympus to Troy and Achaia's armies I came.
Yet tell to me, how art thou minded to quench the battle-flame?"

And Apollo the King made answer, the Zeus-born uttered his rede:
"Let us waken the spirit of Hector the queller of the steed,
If the hero will haply defy some chief of his Danaan foes
Alone with him man against man in the grim fight-grapple to close:



And jealousy-stirred the brazen-harnessed Achaian throng
Shall find them a man to battle with Hector the godlike-strong."
So spake he, and so was Athênê the grey-eyed minded to do.
But the spirit of Priam's son, of the prophet Helenus, knew
How the Gods everlasting communed, and the thing that seemed them good.
And he spake—for he fared through the press till by Hector's side he stood:
"Hector thou son of Priam, Zeus's counsel-peer,
Wilt thou heed me?—behold thy brother am I—I beseech thee hear:
Now bid that the rest of the sons of Achaia and Troy sit down,
And thyself defy thou Achaia's chiefest in battle-renown
To strive with thee, man against man, alone in the terrible fray:
For not yet is thy weird to light on the doom of thy dying day,
For so have I heard the voice of the Gods that abide for aye."
So spake he, and Hector rejoiced at the word with exceeding joy.
Forth to the midst hath he strode, and he stayeth the ranks of Troy,
Grasping his spear by the midst, and all at the wave of his hand
Sat down, and sat the Achaians at Lord Agamemnon's command.
And anigh them Athênê sat, and Apollo Silverbow,
In semblance as birds of the air, as vultures in outward show,
On the lofty oak-tree of Zeus Allfather, the Aegis-King,
Beholding with joy how, rank upon rank thick-clustering,
Sat bristling with buckler and helmet and spear that warrior-ring.
And as over the sea's face spreadeth a shiver of Zephyrus' breath,
Springing up out of calm, and the shining sea groweth dark underneath,
So seemed they, so stirred they, the ranks of Achaian and Trojan folk,

On the plain as they sat, and Hector amidst of the war-hosts spoke :
" Hear me, ye Trojans and mailèd Achaians battle-renowned,
To the end I may utter the words that my heart for my lips hath found :
High-thronèd Kronion hath disannulled our covenant-oath,
For the thoughts of his heart and his dooming are evil against us both,
And shall be, till Troytown beautiful-towered of your hands be ta'en,
Or ye by the sea-tracking galleys be overmastered and slain.
Yet hear—forasmuch as amongst you Achaia's chiefest be,
Let the hero whose spirit stirreth him up to battle with me
Step forth of you all for your champion to stand against Hector to-day.
For thus do I promise—let Zeus be witness of this that I say :—
If so be that he lay me low with the keen-edged brass, let him strip
From my body mine armour, and bear it away to his hollow ship :
But my corse to mine home shall he give, that in death I may have on the pyre
Of the sons and the daughters of Troy the rightful honour of fire.
And if I overcome him and slay, and Apollo vouchsafe me renown,
I will strip off his war-gear, and bear it to holy Ilium-town,
And will hang it on high on the wall of Archer Apollo's fane ;
But his corse will I yield to his friends to bear to the galleys again,
That the long-haired sons of Achaia may lay his bones in the ground,
And by broad-flowing Hellespont's strand may uppile him a sepulchre-mound.
And one shall say—some man of the days that are yet for to be—
In his long swift galley riding the ridges of wine-dark sea :
' The barrow is this of a hero who perished long ago,
Who played the man when Hector the glorious laid him low.'



So shall they say, and for ever my deathless renown shall grow."

So spake he, and hushed were they all, and none spake word for a space,
Ashamed to deny him, yet fearing to meet him face to face.
But after a long time rose Menelaus, and bitterly chode
Reproaching the heroes, while groaned his spirit beneath its load:
"O blustering vaunters!—not men of Achaia, but women be ye!
Surely a horror of horrors, a stain and a shame shall it be
If now there be found for Hector no champion of Danaan birth.
Ha, better it were that ye all should turn unto water and earth,
Spiritless there as ye sit, inglorious, and nothing worth!
But I, even I, will arm me against him: I ween from on high
Be the issues of victory held of the Gods that never die."

So spake he, and dight him in goodly battle-gear for the strife.
Then, O Menelaus, on thee had arisen the end of thy life
At Hector's hands: of a mightier far hadst thou surely been slain,
But the Kings of Achaia upsprang, and they caught thee, to make thee refrain:
And Atreus' son Agamemnon, the lord of many folk,
Himself by the right hand seized thee, and out from the heart he spoke:
"Thou art mad, Menelaus, O fostered of Zeus!—no time it is
For such madness!—refrain thee, how troubled soever thy heart be for this;
Nor be moved for contention's sake to fight with a mightier than thou,
Even Hector, Priam's son:—there be others that hate him, I trow:—
Yea, even Achilles hath shuddered in glory-wafting fight
To meet this man; and what is thy might to Achilles' might?
Nay, turn thou and sit thee down mid the men of thy warrior-band:

The Achaians shall find them a champion against yon Trojan to stand.
Be he never so dauntless-valiant or tireless of toil, full fain,
I ween, shall he rest his knees, if he haply return again
Alive from the fury of war and the terrible battle-strain."
So spake he, and turned his brother's heart from the desperate deed,
Forasmuch as he counselled aright, and the hero hearkened his rede,
And with joy did his henchmen take from his shoulders his war-array.
Then Nestor amidst of the Argives arose, and thus did he say:
"O shame! on Achaia is fallen a heavy grief and a sore!
Bitterly Peleus would groan, that chariot-champion hoar,
Mighty in Myrmidon folkmote, a lord of council-rings,
Who questioned me once in his halls, and rejoiced at the tale of kings,
When he asked of the birth of the mighty, and lineage of princes would hear:—
Ah, were he told how they cower, all these, before Hector in fear,
On the Deathless with lifted hands and with passionate prayer would he call
That his soul from his body might flee adown unto Hades' hall.
O Zeus, Athênê, Apollo, that now as in years overpast
I were stalwart and young as when, where Keladon's stream floweth fast,
The Pylians were gathered to fight with Arcadia's spearmen tall
Where the waters of Jardanus fleet by Pheia's sea-washed wall,
When Ereuthalion for their champion arose, a godlike wight.
In the battle-gear of Arêïthoüs were his shoulders dight,—
Of godlike Arêïthoüs, the warrior-king, who bare
Grim surname, the Mace-man, of men and of women girded fair;
For with spear long-shafted he fought not, nor arrows that smite from afar,



But with mace of the massy iron he rifted the ranks of war.
But Lykurgus by guile, and in nowise by prowess, the death of him wrought,
For he lay in wait in a crag-walled road, where availed him naught
That iron mace, for the spear out of ambush suddenly crashed
Through the midst of his body, and backward adown on the earth was he dashed.
And his war-gear, brazen Arês' gift, was the slayer's spoil,
And thereafter he bare it himself through the War-god's battle-toil.
But Lykurgus in process of time waxed old in his halls, and his gear
He gave to his henchman Ereuthalion, in battle to bear.
So there in the Mace-man's harness our best to the fight he defied :
But they quailed and they shrank from before him, was none would his fury abide.
But I of my spirit unblenching was stirred the battle to try
Against his prowess, albeit the youngest of all was I.
So I fought and I overcame, for Athênê vouchsafed me renown.
Ay, he was the tallest and strongest that ever mine hand smote down ;
For this way and that way he lay outstretched, a giant frame.
Ah, would I were young as then, and the strength of my thews were the same !
Short time should he wait for the combat, Hector with helmet of flame !
Lo, here be the chiefest heroes of all the Achaian race,
Yet in none is there heart to meet this Hector face to face !"

So chode he, the ancient of days, and there rose up nine at the word.
First before all upsprang Agamemnon, the war-folk's lord ;
Thereafter Tydeides arose, Diomedes the stalwart in fight ;
Forth stood the Aiantes, clothed with battle-reckless might ;
And Idomeneus then, and Idomeneus' fight-fellow, Mêriones,

The battle-peer of the manslaying War-god, rose after these.
Thereafter Eurypylus, even Evaimon's glorious seed ;
And Thoas Andraimon's child, and Odysseus the shiftful at need.
So all these champions with Hector the godlike fain would have warred ;
But out spake Nestor again, Gerenia's chariot-lord :
" Cast lots from the first to the last, that our champion be chosen so.
He shall profit the goodly-harnessed host of Achaia, I trow,
Yea, profit his own soul too, if he haply return again
Alive from the fury of war, and the terrible battle-strain."
He spake, and the heroes marked their lots, and they cast each one
Into the helmet of Lord Agamemnon, Atreus' son.
And the war-folk prayed, and uplifted their hands to the Gods on high ;
And thus spake this one and that, looking up to the broad-arched sky :
" Allfather, vouchsafe that the lot on Tydeides or Aias may fall,
Or the king of Mycenæ, the lord of the gold-abounding hall !"
So spake they, and Nestor was shaking the helmet about and about ;
And behold, the token themselves had desired hath leapt thereout,
Even Aias' lot ; and the herald bare through the throng the same,
And from right to left unto chief after chief of Achaia he came.
But they knew not the shard for their own, and one after other denied,
Till he came to the man, through the throng as he fared upon every side,
Who had marked it and cast in the helm, even Aias the stalwart and brave ;
And he stretched forth his hand for his own, and the herald drew near and gave.
And he looked on the mark of his lot, and he knew, and his spirit rejoiced ;
On the ground by his foot hath he cast it, and crieth triumphant-voiced :



"Friends, lo it is mine, this lot; and glad with exceeding joy
Is my heart, for I ween I shall conquer him, Hector the godlike of Troy.
Go to, I will gird me for battle, mine harness of fight will I don;
And do ye make prayer the while unto King Zeus, Kronos' son,
In silence apart by yourselves, lest any of Troy's folk hear—
Ay, or aloud, an ye will: there is no man on earth that we fear.
For none by his prowess shall cause me to flee in mine own despite,
Nor yet by his battle-cunning, for not so skilless of fight
In Salamis' isle was I born and reared unto this my might."
He spake, and to Zeus Kronion the King in prayer did they cry;
And thus spake this one and that, looking up to the broad-arched sky:
"Allfather, most glorious and mighty, who rulest from Ida's crown,
Vouchsafe unto Aias the victory, grant to him battle-renown.
But and if it be Hector thou lovest and wardest with chiefest care,
Unto either of these grant prowess and glory in equal share."
So spake they, and Aias arrayed him in brass-mail glittering bright.
And so soon as the flesh of his body was sheathed in harness of fight,
Forward he sprang, as cometh the War-god's giant form
When he marcheth to battle with heroes uproused to the fury-storm
Of the heart-consuming strife which Kronion hath kindled from far.
So rushed forth Aias the giant, Achaia's bulwark of war,
With a smile on his grim dark face: unswerving his feet drew near
To the foeman with long swift strides, while quivered his lifted spear.
And the sons of the Argives rejoiced and were fain as they looked upon him;
And fear on the Troyfolk fell, that they quaked through every limb.

Yea, the heart in the breast of Hector himself beat fast and hard :
Yet he might not tremble now, nor shrink to the battle-guard
Of the shields of his men, for himself had bidden the foe to the field.
Nearer drew Aias and nearer, bearing his tower-like shield,
Brass laid upon sevenfold hide, which was fashioned of Tychius' hand,
The master of shield-hide-shapers, abider in Hylê-land ;
For he welded together the hides of seven bulls goodly and great
For the glittering buckler, and forged for the eighth a brazen plate.
So bearing his breast-fence Aias Telamon's son drew nigh,
Full nigh unto Hector, and stood, and rang his defiance-cry.
" Hector, man against man shalt thou know of a truth this day
What manner of chieftains be found mid the Danaan war-array,
Though less than rank-rifting Achilles, the lion-hearted, be they.
But he lies mid his galleys, the beakèd questers of sea-tracks dim,
For against Agamemnon, the shepherd of hosts, his wrath is grim.
Yet such men are we as shall stand up before thee, and meet thy might,
Yea, many of us ;—come then, make thou beginning of fight."
Answered him Hector the mighty, the lightning-morioned spoke :
" Aias the Zeus-born, Telamon's son, war-chieftain of folk,
Not of mine heart, as the heart of a weak child, make thou assay,
Or the soul of a woman, that never hath looked on the battle-play.
Nay, well do I know of the onset, the spilling of heroes' life :
To the right, to the left, do I know to cast my shield in the strife,
The craft of the battle-steadfast, the sway of the stubborn targe.
And I know how to plunge mid the surges of fight when the mad steeds charge :



And I know of the War-god's death-dance, the revel of blenchless fight.
Yet would not I take thee unwares, and thou so goodly a wight,
By stealth-watch, but smite thee, if smite thee I may, in all men's sight."[spear,
He spake, and he swung up on high, and he hurled it, the long-shadowed
And he smote on the buckler of Aias, the sevenfold Targe of Fear,
On the brazen face thereof, the uttermost plate of the seven:
And through fold after fold, even six, the tireless brass hath riven:
In the seventh of the hides was it stayed. Thereafter the seed of Heaven,
Aias, hath hurled his lance long-shadowed across the field,
And it smote on the fair-fashioned round of the son of Priam's shield.
Crashed through the glittering buckler the great spear's thunderbolt head,
And it stayed not, but on through the curious work of the corslet it sped:
Through his tunic it shore; by his flank cold-sliding it went full nigh
To the life, but he swerved aside, and the black death passed him by.
Then plucked they the spears long-shafted aback with their hands, they twain,
And as lions ravin-ruthless they fell to the battle again,
Or as wild boars out of the wood, whose strength the strong ones fear.
At the midst of the buckler of Aias the Priamid drave with his spear;
Yet he cleft not the brass plate through, and aback was the point of it bent.
Then leapt on him Aias, and thrust at his shield, and with fury unspent
On went the lance, that he reeled in the midst of his onset-rush:
And it smote on his neck, and it gashed it, and forth did the dark blood gush.
Yet for all this not from the battle did bright-helmed Hector refrain,
But he drew back a step, and a stone in his brawny hand hath he ta'en,
A rock-shard rugged and black, lying huge on the war-winnowed field:

On the buckler of Aias he dashed it, the terrible sevenfold shield,
Full on the midst of the boss, and the clanging brass rang round.
Now stoopeth him Aias, a crag far huger his hand hath found:
And he swung it on high and he hurled, putting measureless might to the cast;
And he burst in the targe with the crash of the boulder millstone-vast;
And he beat down his knees, that outstretched on his back the hero lay
Down dashed on his shield, but Apollo upraised him again straightway. [then,
And with clashing of swords had they closed, and the blades had been reddened
Howbeit the heralds, the messenger-henchmen of Zeus and of men,
Came, one of the Troyfolk, and one of Achaia's mail-clad sons,
Talthybius, Idaius withal, the prudent-hearted ones. [word
And they stretched forth their sceptres 'twixt hero and hero, and spake the
Idaius the herald, the man of the deep heart wisdom-stored:

"No longer, O dearly-belovèd sons, do battle nor fight,
For that dear are ye both in Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper's sight,
And spearmen renowned are ye both—yea, all we know it, I trow:
But the night cometh on: to the hest of the night we needs must bow."

Answered him Telamon's son, strong Aias the battle-athirst:
"Speak thou unto Hector, Idaius, to say this peace-word first,
Forasmuch as 'twas he that challenged our mightiest all to the fray.
Yea, let him begin, and for me, I will do as Hector shall say."

Then spake great Hector, the lord of the helmet of wavering light:
"Aias, since God hath vouchsafed to thee goodly stature and might,
And wisdom, and none of Achaia in spear-craft may match him with thee,
Now therefore refrain we from battle, and let our striving be



For to-day, but hereafter again will we fight, till the judgment of heaven
Pass on us, and victory's crown unto thee or to me shall be given.
Now the night cometh on: that we bow to the hest of the night is meet;
And so shalt thou gladden Achaia's sons by the ships of the fleet,
And chiefly thy kinsfolk and comrades, the hearts that around thee cling.
And for me in the mighty city of Priam the ancient king
The sons of Troy and her daughters royally-robed shall rejoice,
Who will enter, I trow, the holy assembly with suppliant voice.
But come, let us give to each other gifts right glorious,
That they of Achaia and Troy may say concerning us:
'For passion of heart-consuming strife did they fight, these twain,
And thereafter they parted in friendship reconciled again.'"
So spake he, and gave unto Aias the silver-studded glaive;
With its scabbard and sword-belt beautiful-shapen the gift he gave.
And Aias a baldric hath given with purple splendour-dyed.
So parted the heroes, and this to Achaia's war-host hied,
And that to the throng of the Troyfolk fared. Right glad were they
To behold him coming to meet them alive and whole from the fray,
Escaped from the fury of Aias, the hands unmatched in the strife.
To the city they led him, they whose souls had despaired of his life.
And the goodly-harnessed Achaians the while brought Aias on
Unto King Agamemnon the godlike, exulting for victory won.
So when they were come to the tent of Atreus' son the King,
The lord of the war-host slaughtered an ox for their banqueting,
A male of the fifth year, slain to the Mighty, the Lover of Thunder.

And they flayed it, and wrought with the knife, and parted the carcase in sunder;
And deftly in pieces they carved it, and ran the long spits through, [drew.
And they heedfully roasted the same, and the roast from the flames they with-
So when they had ceased from their toil, and the banquet was all prepared,
They feasted, and none lacked aught of the banquet equal-shared. 320
And to Aias for honour was given the long unsevered chine
By wide-ruling King Agamemnon, the hero of Atreus' line.
But when craving for meat was gone, and their lips no more were athirst,
For the weaving of counsel-weft uprose the ancient first,
Even Nestor, whose counsel aforetime was ever accounted the best: 325
So with kindly intent he arose, and his rede to the kings he addressed:
"Atreides, chiefs of the war-host, hearken the thing that I say:
Lo, many Achaians with long-flowing hair lie dead this day:
Their purple blood with Skamander's fair-flowing stream hath been blended
By Arês the keen, and their souls unto Hades' halls have descended. 330
Therefore 'twere good that thou stay the Achaians from fight with the dawn;
And for us, we will gather the corpses, and hitherward let them be drawn
By our oxen and mules upon wains, and here will we burn them with fire
A little aloof from the ships, that the bones from the funeral pyre [335
To their children and homes may be borne, when cometh the day of returning
And earth will we bring from the plain, and around the place of the burning
One barrow for all will we pile, and beside it the towers tall
Will we rear of a rampart, a fence for the ships and ourselves withal.
And gates 'twixt tower and tower, close-fitting and strong, will we frame [340
In such wise that a pathway for chariots may lie through the midst of the same.



And a trench therewithout will we dig us, a foss deep-delved hard by;
For a bulwark to right and to left of our steeds and our host shall it lie,
Lest haply the war of the chariots of Troy burst in like a flood."
So spake he, and praised him the kings, and they deemed his counsel good.
On the citadel gathered the while the Troyfolk in council-ring,
With terrible turmoil, hard by the palace of Priam the king;
And Antenor the wise-heart rose, and he uttered his counselling:
"Hear, Trojans and Dardans, and ye of our war-aid battle-renowned,
To the end I may utter the word that mine heart for my lips hath found:—
Go to, let us yield up Helen the Argive Queen, and restore
The treasures withal unto Atreus' sons; for the oaths that we swore
Are broken the while we fight: no blessing nor gain unto us
Shall the toil of our hands accomplish, I trow, if ye do not thus."
So spake he, and sat him down: forthright at his challenge-word
Rose Alexander the godlike, the fair-tressed Helen's lord;
And the winged words leapt from his lips, and wrathfully answered he:
"Antenor, thou speakest as one that is nowise a friend unto me!
Thou lackest not wit for devising of other and wiser rede.
But and if of thine heart's set purpose thou speakest in very deed,
Of a surety the Gods and none other have reft thy senses away!
But amidst of the horse-quelling Trojans this one word will I say—
Yea, I declare it outright—I will not yield up my bride.
But the wealth that from Argos I bare to our halls o'er the harvestless tide,
All this will I give, and will add of mine own store more beside."
So spake he, and sat him down in his place, and arose thereupon

The counsel-peer of the Gods, even Priam, Dardanus' son;
And with kindly intent he spake, that old man reverence-crowned:
"Hear, Trojans and Dardans, and ye of our war-aid battle-renowned,
To the end I may utter the word that mine heart for my lips hath found.
Now take ye your supper as heretofore in the leaguered town,
And set ye the guard of the watchmen, and be not of sleep borne down.
And at dawn to the hollow ships let the herald Idaius go,
That Atreus' son Agamemnon and Menelaus may know
Alexander's speech, who was cause of the war-feud bitter and stern.
This word of weight withal shall he say, and their will shall he learn,
If they haply be minded to cease from the wild-voiced war, till we burn
Our dead, thereafter again will we fight, till the judgment of heaven
Pass on us, and victory's crown unto us or the foe shall be given."
He spake, and with right good will did they hearken his rede and obey:
So squadron by squadron they supped in the place where the war-host lay.
And with dawning Idaius fared to the hollow ships by the strand;
And in folkmote the Danaans found he, the War-god's henchman-band,
By the stern of the galley of King Agamemnon: and strode straightway
Into their midst the loud-voiced herald, and thus did he say:
"Hear, Atreus' son and the lords of the host of Achaia-land!
King Priam and all the high-born Trojans have given command
That I tell you—if haply the thing in your eyes seem fair and good—
The word of the prince Alexander, for whose sake rose this feud:
What treasures soe'er in his hollow ships o'er the harvestless tide
Alexander bare unto Troy—would God ere then he had died!—



He willeth to yield, and to add of his own store more beside.
But the lady the wife of battle-renowned Menelaus the king
He refuseth to yield, albeit the Trojans require this thing.
This word moreover they bade me to say, that your will I may learn—
If perchance ye be minded to cease from the wild-voiced war, till we burn
Our dead, thereafter again will we fight, till the judgment of heaven
Pass on us, and victory's crown unto you or to us shall be given."

So spake he, and hushed were they all, and none made answer to him ;
Till cried at the last Diomedes, the battle-helper grim :

" Let none take the treasures wherewith Alexander for wrong would atone,
Neither Helen, for known is it now, yea, even to the fool is it known,
That the bands of destruction by this are around the Trojans thrown."

So spake he, and shouted the sons of Achaia with one accord,
Praising the dauntless rede, Diomedes the horse-queller's word.
Then to Idaius spake Agamemnon, a great folk's lord :

" Idaius, the word of Achaia's sons hast thou heard with thine ears,
In what fashion they answer thee ; and herein is my pleasure as theirs.
But as touching the dead and the burning of these, I gainsay not ;
For no man begrudgeth the right of the dead which have died, I wot,
To render the life-forlorn the atonement of fire with speed.
Of the oaths shall the Lord of Hêrê, the Thunderer Zeus, take heed."

Unto all the Gods for a witness he lifted the sceptre he bare.
And to Ilium the holy again did the herald Idaius fare.
And the Trojans and children of Dardanus sat in folkmote there,
All in a throng assembled, awaiting the coming again

Of their herald: and came Idaius, and stood in the midst of the men,
And he spake forth his message, and all they girded themselves with speed
To take up the corpses, and gather the wood for the bale-fire's need.
And forth of the fair-benched galleys the Argives hasted the while
To take up their dead, and to gather them wood for the funeral pile.

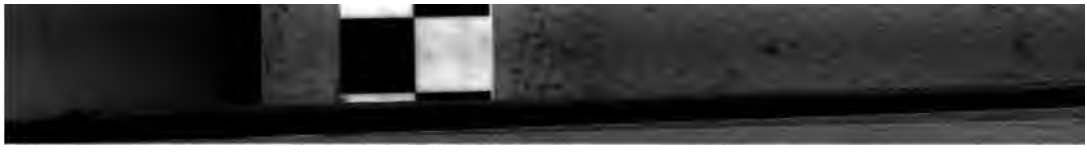
And now was the slant red sun just smiting the meadows with flame,
As out of the softly-fleeting deep-flowing Ocean he came,
Climbing the sky; and the death-wains met in peace on the plain.
Then was it hard to discern 'twixt foeman and friend mid the slain.
But with water they washed the defilement from each blood-dabbled face,
Shedding the hot-gushing tear, and their dead to the wains did they raise.
But Priam the mighty forbade them to make lamentation, and so
Silently heaped they their dead on the pyres, heart-stricken with woe.
So they burnt them with fire, and to Ilium the holy they gat them again.
In the selfsame fashion the goodly-harnessed Achaian men
Heaped up their dead on the pyres, with anguish stricken-hearted;
And they burnt them with fire, and aback to the hollow ships they departed.

Still was it twilight, nor yet was the flush of the dawning day,
When gathered around the pyre Achaia's chosen array.
And they brought thither earth from the plain, and over the ashes grey
One barrow for all did they pile, and beside it towers tall
Did they rear, and a rampart, a fence for the ships and themselves withal.
And gates 'twixt tower and tower, close-fitting and strong, did they frame,
In such wise that a pathway for chariots should lie through the midst of the same.
And a trench therewithout did they dig them, and delved it deep in the ground,



Broad was it and great ; and the wall with a palisade-breastwork they crowned.
So toiled they, the long-haired Achaians, at trench and giant wall.
But the Gods as they sat with Zeus in the Lightning-hurler's hall
Marvelled at that great work of the brazen-harnessed folk.
And Poseidon arose in the midst of them all, and the Earth-shaker spoke :
" Allfather, shall mortal be found any more on the wide earth-plain
Who shall utter the purpose and thought of his heart to the Deathless again ?
Seest thou not how the long-haired folk of Achaia-land
Have built them a wall for a fence of their ships, and on either hand
Have dug them a trench, and have given to the Gods no hecatomb ?
Lo, far as the dawning shineth the fame thereof shall come ;
And men shall forget that wall which Apollo and I of yore
For the hero Laomedon builded with toil exceeding sore."
Sorely disquieted answered him Zeus the Cloudrack-king :
" Ha, Earth-shaker, Wide-overcomer, what ailed thee to say this thing ?
Some other perchance of the Gods might fear such purposing,
Who in might of his hands is weaker, whose prowess is nowise as thine :
But thy worship and thy renown spreadeth far as the dawn-rays shine.
Go to, when again the host of Achaia, the folk long-haired,
To their own dear fatherland-home with the host of their ships shall have fared,
Then shatter their wall, then utterly whelm it beneath the tide,
And again overspread with the tokenless sands the sea-beach wide,
And so shalt thou bring unto naught the Achaians' rampart of pride."
So each unto other spake in Olympus the Deathless Ones.
And the sun went down, and wrought was the work of Achaia's sons :

And they slaughtered them beeves mid the tents, and they supped, and behold
Tall ships full many from Lesbos' isle, with wine deep-freighted, [there waited
Keels that Jêson's son Eunêüs had sent oversea,
Who was born to Jêson the shepherd of folk by Hypsipylê.
And to King Agamemnon and lord Menelaus of Atreus' line 470
Did Jêson's son give freely a thousand measures of wine.
So for wine to the ships did the long-haired sons of Achaia come.
There were some brought brass for a price, and the iron grey-gleaming some :
This came with the hides of oxen, and that with the unslain beast,
And another with captives of war : so they made them a plenteous feast. 475
All night for Achaia's long-haired sons was the banquet arrayed ;
And in Troytown revelled the Trojans and they of their warrior-aid.
And Counsellor Zeus all night caused tokens of wrath to appear
With terrible thunders ; and paleness gat hold of them all, and fear, [480
In such wise that they spilled from the beakers the wine on the earth : was none
Dared drink, or ever he poured unto Kronos' mighty son.
So they gat them unto their rest, and the boon of sleep they won.



BOOK VIII.

The counsel of Godfolk, the Trojans' prevailing, the glory of Hector.

NOW Dawn the Saffron-mantled was spread o'er the earth abroad,
And assembled of Zeus the Thunder-triumphant came Goddess and God
To the topmost crest of Olympus, the giant ridge-ribbed hill:
And he lifted his voice and he spake, and the Gods all hearkened his will:
"Give ear, ye Gods, unto me, ye Goddesses, hearken my speech,
That the thing which my heart in my breast hath commanded my lips may teach.
Let none of the Daughters of Heaven nor Lords of Olympus essay
To countervail my word, but see that ye all obey,
To the end I may bring to pass right speedily this my device.
And whomso I mark of the Gods that in wilful-wayward wise
Shall sunder himself, to the helping of Trojan or Danaan to go,
To Olympus aback shall he flee, sore smitten with shameful blow.
Or grasp him will I, and will hurl him adown unto Tartarus' gloom
Far down, where under the earth is the nethermost Gulf of Doom:
There be the portals of iron, the threshold of brass is there:

Deep below Hades as earth is from heaven lies the Hell of despair.
How unmatched of the rest of the Gods is my prowess then shall he know.
—Nay then, make trial, ye Gods, that ye all may be certified so:
Let fall from the floor of Heaven a rope of the twisted gold:
Ye Gods, set hand thereto, ye Goddesses, take fast hold:
Yet should ye not drag down from the sky to the dark earth-plain
The Highest, the Lord of Counsel, though sorely ye labour and strain.
But and if I should put forth my strength against yours, if my pleasure it be,
With the earth would I hale you up, and therewithal the sea:
Then would I bind that cord round a peak of Olympus flung,
And all those things should abide in the firmament's mid-space hung.
Even so in my might am I matchless all Godfolk and menfolk among."
So spake he, and fell on them all a silence heavy and chill:
Long sat they aghast at his speech, at the word of his masterful will.
At the last the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed made reply:
"Allfather begotten of Kronos, most highest of all that be high,
Well know we that this thy prowess may nowise be overborne:
Yet for the sake of the Danaan heroes our spirits mourn,
Who must perish and fill up the cup of a doom of bitter pain.
Howbeit, since this is thy bidding, from battle will we refrain:
Yet will we put in the hearts of the Argives our counsel, that so
They may perish not all in the hour when the fire of thy wrath is aglow."
Then answered and spake to her Zeus, and the Cloudrack-sweeper smiled:
"Nay, be of good cheer, O Trito-begotten, beloved child:
I spake not with purpose of heart, but of grace unto thee am I fain."



He spake, and he yoked to his chariot his brass-hoofed coursers twain,
Swift-flying, with necks overstreamed with stormy golden mane. [his hand,
And he clad him with gold on his flesh, and the scourge hath he grasped in
Fair-fashioned of gold ; and now on the chariot-floor doth he stand ;
And he lasheth the horses to speed, and with right good will did they fly
In the midst of the space 'twixt earth and the star-bestudded sky.
And to Ida the fountain-flashing, the mother of beasts of the wold,
He came, unto Gargarus : there through his temple the incense rolled.
And the Father of Gods and Men there stayed on the holy ground
His steeds, and unyoked them, and poured a thick mist-veil around.
Then glory-exulting he sat on the mountain's topmost crown,
On the burg of the Trojan folk and Achaia's ships looking down.

And the long-haired Achaian men brake bread in the morning light
In haste mid their tents, and thereafter they clad them in harness of fight.
In the city the while the Troyfolk dight them in war-array,
Far fewer by tale, but for all this eager they were for the fray,
For of uttermost need must they fight for their children and wives that day.
Then wide were the gates all flung, and thereout did the war-folk pour,
Footmen and horsemen, and rose the battle's thunder-roar.
Ever the mid-space narrowed, till closing they mingled, and then
Clashed targets together, and spears, and the fury of brass-mailed men :
Dashed each against other the boss-studded bucklers that strong arms bore,
And up to the heaven went rolling the battle's thunder-roar ;
And the agony-scream and the triumphing-shout maddened up evermore
From the slayers and them that they slew, and the earth ran streams of gore.

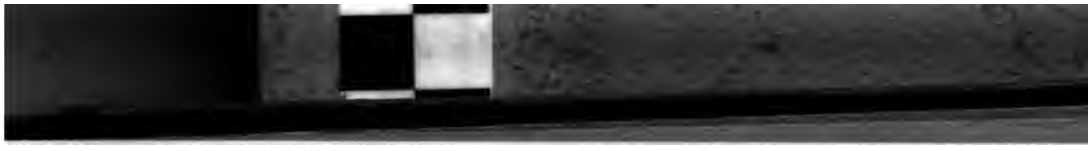
Now all through the morning-tide, and still while the day waxed hot,
Fast fell the folk as the shafts from host unto host were shot.
But so soon as the sun bestrode the midmost height of the sky,
Then hung Allfather his golden Balances forth from on high;
And therein two tokens of doom of the outstretcher Death he laid,
For the horse-quelling Trojans and men of Achaia brazen-arrayed.
By the midst did he grasp them and raise them—sank the doom-fraught day
Of the sons of Achaia, and low on the earth all-bountiful lay;
But the fates of the people of Troy soared up to the broad-arched heaven.
And he sent forth the voice of his thunder from Ida, and flashed his levin
Over the men of the host of Achaia, and all they saw [awe.
And marvelled, and pale grew their faces, and thrilled were their spirits with
Then Idomeneus shrank, nor endured Agamemnon the king to remain,
Nor the henchmen of Arês the battle abode, the Aiantes twain.
Only Gerenian Nestor, Achaia's warder, stayed,
Yet not of his will, for his car-steed low by an arrow was laid
Which Paris had sped, the lord of Helen the beautiful-tressed,
That it smote on the head of the beast, where highest upriseth the crest
Of the horse-mane: the death-spot it is, the perilous place of bane:
And in agony high did he rear as the shaft plunged into his brain;
And he tangled and troubled his yokefellows there as he writhed on the dart;
And the old king sprang, and he slashed at the traces, to cut them apart
With his falchion; but Hector's fleetfoot horses the while drew near
Through the turmoil of battle, bearing a valiant charioteer,
Even Hector, and there by his hand had the ancient hero died,



But with swift keen glance Diomedes the battle-helper espied;
And he sent forth a terrible shout, and afar to Odysseus he cried:
"Ho! Zeus-born son of Laertes, Odysseus the shiftful-wise,
Whither art turning thy back, as the dastard in battle-throng flies?
What ho! have a care lest a spear, as thou fleest, thy back should sting!
Shame! stand—let us thrust yon savage away from the white-haired king!"
So cried he, yet heard not Odysseus the toil-tried godlike man,
But afar to the hollow galleys Achaian in haste he ran.
And Tydeides alone with none other plunged mid the heart of the fray,
Till in front of the chariot he stood of the Neleïd warrior grey;
And the winged words leapt to his lips, and to Nestor thus did he say:
"Good sooth, old sire, but the younger warriors press thee hard;
And thy sinews by this be unstrung, and by eld is thy prowess marred,
And thy charioteer is a weakling, and these thy steeds be slow.
Go to, get thee up to my chariot, and so shalt thou see and know
The horses of Tros, how featly over the plain they race
Hither and thither, unperilled in flight and triumphant in chase,
Which I won from the panic-wafter Aeneas in battle-strain.
To thy steeds let thy henchman and mine give heed, but with these we twain
On the horse-quelling Trojans will dash, that Hector may understand
Whether or no my spear hath forgotten to rage in mine hand."
So spake he, and Nestor Gerenia's horseman hearkened his rede.
To the old king's chariot-mares did the henchmen twain give heed,
Even Sthenelus valiant and strong and Eurymedon faithful and true;
And on to the war-car of lord Diomedes stept they two.



And Nestor upgathered the glittering reins in his hands, and he lashed
The horses to speed, and swiftly adown upon Hector they dashed:
And as Hector came on in his fury, Tydeides hurled with his spear:
But lo, he hath missed him; howbeit his henchman-charioteer,
Even Eniopeus the son of Thebaius the noble of heart,
As he swayed the chariot-reins, was cleft through the breast by the dart.
Down from the car was he hurled, and the fleetfoot steeds in affright
Swerved, and unstrung were his sinews, the life from his limbs took flight.
Then was Hector's soul for his charioteer overclouded with pain;
Yet he left him to lie, though never so grieved for his comrade slain;
And he hied him in quest of a stalwart charioteer: not long
Were his battle-steeds lacking a lord, for on Iphitus' scion strong,
Bold Archeptolemus, lighted he soon, and he caused him to stand
Behind his fleetfoot horses, and gave the reins to his hand.
 Then had been havoc of slaughter, and ruin that none might amend,
And in Ilium's leaguered walls like lambs had the Trojans been penned;
But with swift keen glance the Father of Gods and Men hath seen,
And with terrible thunder he hurled the lightning's lurid sheen.
Down before prince Diomedes' car to the earth it came,
And fearful to see was the light as it gleamed from the sulphur-flame:
Then terror-astonied the horses cowered beneath the car,
And from Nestor's hands the glittering reins flew, whirled afar:
And adread was his soul, and to lord Diomedes in haste spake he:
 "Tydeides, turn backward thy thunderfoot steeds from the battle to flee!
Discernest thou not how Zeus vouchsafeth not triumph to thee?



For Kronion bestoweth the battle-renown upon yonder foe
For to-day, but hereafter shall give it to us, if his pleasure be so.
But the purpose of Zeus no deathling may wrest, that it shall not befall,
Not though he be never so stalwart, for throned is his might above all."
Then spake Diomedes the battle-helper to Pylos' lord:
"Yea, wisely and well, old man, has thou spoken every word:
But into mine heart and my spirit there cometh the fierce shame-pang,
For Hector one day mid the Trojans shall utter his vaunting harangue:—
'Afraid was Tydeides, and fled from my face to the ship-fringed wave!'
So shall he boast:—that day let the earth gape wide for my grave."
Answered him Nestor, and spake Gerenia's car-borne king:
"Ah son of the war-wise Tydeus, what ailed thee to say this thing?
Though Hector should call thee a dastard and weakling—what of the lie?
Shall Trojan be found to believe it? Shall Dardan be blinded thereby?
Shall the wives of the great-heart spearmen of Troy that false vaunt trust,
Even they whose lusty lords thou hast hurled to the bloody dust?"
So spake he, and flightward he turned those thunderfoot horses aback [track
Through the turmoil of fight, while the Trojans and Hector pressed hard on their
With yelling unearthly, and hurled they the bitter shafts of war:
And Hector the mighty, the lightning-helmeted, shouted from far:
"Tydeides, the fleet-horsed Danaans wont to honour thee most
With the chief of the seats, and the wine of the feast, and the choice of the roast:
But now shall they scorn thee: a woman thou art in the testing day!
Out, paltry baby! Not for such flinching of mine from the fray [165
Shalt thou climb to the height of our towers, shalt thou bear in thy ships oversea



Our wives into thraldom—ere then will I deal thy doom unto thee!"
So scoffed he: the soul of Tydeides wavered, exceeding fain
To turn back his horses, and man against man to meet him again.
Thrice in the balance he hung of the thoughts and intents of his will,
Thrice thundered the Counsel-father from Ida's crag-crowned hill,
Giving the Trojans a sign of the turning of victory's tide.
And cheering the Trojans on with a great voice Hector cried:
"Trojans and Lycians and Dardans that close in the grapple of fight,
Quit you like men, my friends, and remember your battle-storm-might!
I know that Kronion vouchsafeth me now of his gracious will
Triumph and high renown, for the Danaans naught but ill.
Fools! that devised forsooth yon ramparts worthless-frail
And crumbling-weak!—against my might shall they nothing avail!
Yon trench they have delved for their warding full lightly my horses shall leap.
And when at the last we shall win to their hollow ships by the deep,
Then see that ye have with you ravening flame of the red hearth-coals,
To the end I may burn their galleys with fire, and may speed the souls
Of the Argives to Hades, as 'wildered they gasp where the smoke-cloud rolls."
So spake he, and cried on his steeds fair-ranged in a goodly line
"Xanthus, and thou O Podargus, and Aithon, and Lampus divine,
Now make ye amends for the tending, for all the loving care
Of Andromachê, mighty-hearted Eëtion's daughter fair,
For that ever she poured out for you heart-gladdening golden grain,
Yea, mingled you wine for your drinking, whenso your spirit was fain,
Or ever she spread for her lord and her love the banquet array.



On then, and speed you in chase, to the end we may win for a prey
The buckler of Nestor, the glory whereof in the heavens hath been told,
The tale of the shield all-golden, whose very rods be of gold,
And tear from the shoulders of lord Diomedes, the horse-quelling king,
The corslet cunningly-wrought, of the God-smith's fashioning.
Now if we might win for us these, I would hope this very night
To drive the Achaians aboard of their galleys for sea-borne flight."

So cried he, but Hêrê the Queen that vaunt might nowise brook;
But she started and stirred on her throne, that wide Olympus shook;
And she turned to Poseidon the mighty, and thus to the God spake she:

"Out on it, Earth-shaker, Wide-overcomer!—the heart of thee
Is nowise moved with compassion for Danaans perishing,
Albeit to Helikê's shrine and to Aigae their gifts they bring,
Gifts many and lovely-fair!—ah, wish them victory thou!
For if but in heart we were one, who are friends of the Danaans now,
To thrust back the Trojans, and bridle the Far-beholder's will,
Sorrow of soul should be his, lone-seated on Ida's hill!"

Sorely disquieted Earth-shaker answered, the sea-depths' lord:
"Hêrê, thou reckless of tongue, what ailed thee to say this word?
I would not, I, that the rest of the host of Heaven should war
With Zeus, with the son of Kronos, for greater his might is by far."

So spake they each unto other there in the heavenly place.
But from trench unto rampart and ships, even all that middle space,
With chariots was thronged, and with heroes, the wielders of the spear,
Close-huddled, and he that pent them was Arês' battle-peer

Hector the son of Priam, when Zeus gave victory-fame.
And now had he burnt the shapely ships with devouring flame,
But the heart of the King Agamemnon did Hêrê the Queen inspire
To bestir him, and kindle with speed the Achaian battle-fire.
And he hasted along by the tents, by the ships of Achaia he sped,
With a great blood-crimson cloak in his brawny hand outspread ;
And he stood by the huge dark bulk of Odysseus' sea-swift keel,—
Midmost it was, that a shout unto either end might peal,
To where Aias, Telamon's son, had camped his warrior-band,
And the tents of Achilles, for these in the pride of their strength of hand
At the uttermost ends of the host had haled up their ships on the strand,—
And with voice far-piercing the din to the Danaans shouted he :
" Shame on you, Argives !—ye bywords, ye dastards goodly to see ! [day
Where now are your boastings ?—ye said, ' We are best of the best ! ' in the
When ye babbled vainglorious vaunts as in Lemnos' isle we lay,
As ye feasted on stintless cheer of the flesh of the tall-horned kine,
As ye drank of the mighty bowls filled up to the brim with wine.
' Not a man of us all but will stand against Trojans a hundred,' ye said,
' Yea, or two hundred in fight ! '—and of one are ye now adread,
Even Hector, who soon shall consume the galleys with ravening flame !
Zeus, Father, was ever a king god-fostered on whom there came
Such madness of folly from thee, to bereave him of glory's meed ?
Yet never, I swear it, by stately altar of thine did I speed
In my galley as hither to ruin I came, but in sacrifice
Did I burn on them all the fair beeves' fat-enfolded thighs,



In mine heart's fierce yearning to smite yon burg of the mighty wall.
O Zeus, vouchsafe me in any wise this one boon of all—
Suffer my people at least to escape, that they perish not so!
Not thus do thou bow the Achaians beneath their Trojan foe!" [245

Then Allfather was moved unto ruth by his tears, that he wept not in vain,
And vouchsafed him the lives of his folk, that the people should not be slain.
And he sent forth an eagle, the augury-peerless of all winged kind,
Bearing a fawn in his talons, the child of a fleetfoot hind.
And he dropped that fawn to the earth by the altar of Zeus most fair,
For unto the Lord of Boding the folk did sacrifice there. 250
And they saw, and they knew that Zeus had sped that eagle's flight,
And they leapt on the Trojans, and woke in their spirits the rapture of fight.

Then of all their thousands was none, as the long line surged to the war,
Might boast that his fleetfoot steeds outran Diomedes' car
Over the trench to bound, and to close in the fight with the foe; 255
But far before all did he lay a Trojan warrior low,
Agelaus, Phradmon's son; for he turned back his steeds in his fear,
But even as he wheeled them, plunged in his back Diomedes' spear
'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it crashed:
From the chariot he fell, and his armour above him clanged and clashed. 260

Then charged Agamemnon and Lord Menelaus, Atreus' sons,
Then charged the Aiantes twain, those battle-furious ones,
Idomeneus then, and Idomeneus' henchman Meriones,
The battle-peer of the manslaying War-god, charged with these.
Then the glorious son of Evaimon, Eurypylus, dashed on the foe; 265

And on came Teucer, the ninth of them, straining his back-springing bow ;
And screened by Telamon's scion he stood, by Aias' shield.
Ever stealthily Aias withdrew it, and glancing across the field
The hero shot from his covert ; on whomso amidst of the host
Lighted his arrow, he fell, and he straightway gave up the ghost.
Then backward he stepped, and as cowereth a child to his mother, again
Unto Aias he shrank, and the bright shield hid that speeder of bane.
Whom smote he, Teucer the princely, first of the Trojan men ?
Orsilochus was it, and Ormenus next, Ophelestes then :
Lo, Daitor and Chromius are down, Lykophontes the godlike is dead,
Polyaimon's son Amopaon is slain, Melanippus is sped !
So one after other he bowed to the earth each stately head.
And Lord Agamemnon beheld, and rejoiced with exceeding joy
For the havoc his mighty bow dealt forth mid the ranks of Troy :
And he came and he stood by his side, and an eager word he spoke :
" Teucer, belovèd, thou Telamon's son, war-captain of folk,
Shoot on : be a light of salvation to us, be a glory-star
Unto Telamon, him that fostered thine helpless years afar
In his palace, and scorned not thy birth, but in all love nurtured thee :
Now unto high renown exalt him, afar though he be.
For thus do I tell thee, and surely shall this my pledge be fulfilled—
If Zeus shall vouchsafe, if Athênê withal shall be gracious-willed,
That I smite yon Ilium, spoiling the goodly-builded town,
First after myself will I give thee the guerdon of battle-renown,
A tripod, or horses twain, and the chariot therewithal,



Or a damsel to take to thy bed, a lovely war-won thrall."

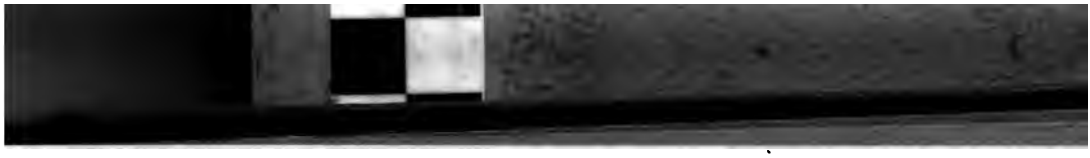
Answered him Teucer the princely, and spake unto Atreus' son:

"Most glorious Atreides, what hast thou to do to prick me on
Who am battle-aflame myself?—So long as abideth my might
I cease not, but since toward Ilium backward we rolled the fight,
Man after man from that hour have I marked: I have laid them low:
Eight be the long-barbed arrows of death that have leapt from my bow:
There is none but in flesh of a battle-swift warrior its rest hath found:
But him can I nowise smite, yon murder-frenzied hound!"

Even as he spake it, he sped from the bowstring a shaft yet again
Full against Hector—to smite him his soul was exceeding fain.
But it missed him, howbeit a son of Priam, a princely wight,
Gorgythion, he smote,—in the midst of his breast did the war-shaft light,—
Whom a bride that from Aisumê-city was brought to the old king bare,
Kastianeira the lovely, in form as a Goddess fair.
And as boweth the crown of a poppy aside in a garden-bed,
Overborne by the weight of its fruit and the rains from the spring-clouds shed,
So, overweighed by his helmet, sidewards drooped his head.

And Teucer thereafter shot from the bowstring a shaft yet again
Full against Hector,—to smite him his soul was exceeding fain:—
But behold, yet again hath he missed, for Apollo turned it aside:
But Hector's charioteer, Archeptolemus peril-tried,
As he rushed to the war, did the shaft on the breast by the nipple smite:
Down from the car was he hurled, and the fleetfoot steeds in affright
Swerved, and unstrung were his sinews, the life from his limbs took flight.

Then was Hector's soul for his charioteer overclouded with pain ;
Yet he left him to lie, though never so grieved for his war-fellow slain.
Now anigh him was Kebrionês, which was brother to him that was dead ;
And he bade him to take the reins, and he hearkened and did as he said.
From the lightning-gleaming car to the earth did Hector bound
With a terrible shout, and he snatched a rugged stone from the ground,
And he rushed upon Teucer,—to smite him his soul was exceeding fain.
From his quiver a bitter-keen shaft even then had the archer ta'en.
On the bowstring he laid it,—but Hector the splendour-morioned hurled,
And even as he drew back his arm, on the collar-bone crashed swift-whirled
That crag 'twixt the neck and the chest, and a deadly spot is the same ;
Even there, as he drew on his foeman, the rush of the rock-shard came.
Snapped was the bowstring, and palsy-numbed was his wrist by the blow,
And he sank to his knees, and dropped from his nerveless hands the bow.
But Aias forgat not his brother's plight, to the earth as he reeled,
But he ran and bestrode him, and cast round about him the fence of his shield.
And trusty war-fellows twain uplifted the stricken one,
For Alastor the godlike came with Mekisteus, Echius' son ;
And aback to the hollow galleys they bare him groaning sore.
And the Lord of Olympus enkindled the Trojans' might once more :
And they drave the Achaians over the deep-delved trench forthright ;
And charging afront of their battle went Hector exulting in might.
Even as a staunch hound holdeth a boar or a lion in chase,
And snaps evermore, as his swift feet follow in furious race,
At the flank or the haunch, keen-watching the beast's swift turnings aye,



So Hector pressed on the long-haired men of Achaia's array,
Ever slaying the hindermost, as they fled all terror-aghast. [passed,
But when through their palisade-fence and their trench in their flight they had
And many an one of their host by the hands of the Trojans had died,
Then by their galleys they halted, then were they fain to abide,
Each calling on other, and lifting their hands to the Gods on high,
Unto all the Deathless they cried with exceeding bitter cry,
While this way and that way Hector was wheeling his steeds fair-maned,
Glaring with eyes of the Gorgon or Arês the murder-stained.
And Hêrê the ivory-wristed beheld them pity-stirred:
Straightway she cried to Athênê, and spake the swift-winged word:
"Ha, daughter of Zeus the Aegis-lord, shall we no more heed
How the Danaans perish in this the uttermost hour of their need?
Who must perish and fill up the cup of a doom of bitter pain
By the onslaught of one; for he rageth with fury that none may restrain,
Hector the Priamid,—yea, he hath brought on them manifold bane."
Made answer Athênê, and stern were the steel-grey eyes and grim:
"Would God this fellow might yield up the strength and the spirit of him,
That the hands of the Argives here in his home his life might spill!
But the heart of my father is mad, and its malice waxeth still,—
The tyrant, the ever-unrighteous, the thwarter of all my will!
Never he calleth to mind how many a time his son
Was delivered by me when he fainted by toils of Eurystheus fordone.
For his wont was to weep toward heaven, and Zeus at his helpless cry
To deliver him out of his straits ever sent me down from the sky.

For had this but been known to the heart whose wisdom is come too late,
What time unto Hades he sent him, the Warder of the Gate,
To bring from the netherworld gloom dark Hades' loathly hound,
From the cataract waters of Styx no way of escape had he found.
But behold, he abhorreth me now, and the counsels of Thetis hath heard,
Who hath kissed his knees, and hath lifted a suppliant hand to his beard,
Beseeching Allfather to honour burg-waster Achilles her son.
—Yet the day shall redawn when he calleth the Grey-eyed his darling one!
Now yoke us thy thunderfoot horses, the tramplers of the sky,
And into the palace of Zeus the Aegis-lord will I
To gird me with harness of battle, and so shall I haply see
If Hector the splendour-morioned, the child of Priam, with glee
Will behold us twain, through the highways of war as we flash on his sight.
Ha, many a Trojan shall banquet the vultures and dogs to-night
With his fat and his flesh, by the galleys Achaian slain in the fight!"
 She spake, and the Goddess Hêrê the white-armed hearkened her rede;
And to harness the golden-frontleted horses hied her with speed
Hêrê the Goddess, the Queen, great Kronos' glorious seed.
But Athênê the child of the Aegis-wielder, the Lord of Thunder,
Cast down on her father's threshold her mantle's woven wonder,
The rainbow-broidered robe of her own hands' fashioning;
And she did on her body the tunic of Zeus the Cloudrack-king,
And around her the harness of tear-drenched battle in haste did she fling.
And her feet hath she set on the floor of the chariot that flameth as fire,
And she graspeth her huge strong spear, for the Child of a Mighty Sire



Quelleth therewith whole ranks of the heroes that kindle her ire.
Swiftly hath Hêrê uplifted the scourge, and the steeds doth she lash:
Self-moving the gates of Heaven spring wide with a thunder-crash,
Whose warders the Hours be, to whom is the charge of Olympus given
To open or shut the rift in the cloud-built rampart of Heaven.
On through the portal the steeds fair-heeding the goad have they driven.
But Allfather from Ida beholding with terrible anger was stirred;
And he hasted Iris the golden-pinioned to bear his word:
"Speed thee, swift Iris, and turn them aback, and forbid them to rise
Against me in defiance,—our strife shall be fought in terrible wise!
For this will I say, yea also will surely accomplish the same—
While yet they whirl onward the chariot, their fleetfoot steeds will I maim,
And will hurl from the car-seat the riders, and shatter the star-bright wain.
And not in the compass of ten slow-wheeling years shall their pain
Be assuaged, and the deep-scored traces be healed of the thunderbolt-scar;
That the Grey-eyed may know what she doeth defying her father in war.
But not against Hêrê so much have I indignation or wrath,
For, whatso I speak, evermore is she wont to cross my path."
So spake he, and storm-footed Iris arose to deliver his hest:
To the heights of Olympus afar hath she flashed from Ida's crest.
At the entering-in of the gate of Olympus the myriad-scarred
She met them, and spake the behest of Zeus, and their path she barred:
"Whitherward rush ye?—why are your proud hearts madness-driven?
Allfather forefendeth that help to the Danaan men be given.
For this is his threat—yea, Kronos' son will accomplish the same:—

While yet they whirl onward the chariot, your fleetfoot steeds will he maim,
And will hurl from the car-seat the riders, and shatter the star-bright wain.
And not in the compass of ten slow-wheeling years shall your pain
Be assuaged, and the deep-scored traces be healed of the thunderbolt-scar ;
That the Grey-eyed may know what she doeth defying her father in war.
But not against Hêrê so much hath he indignation or wrath,
For, whatso he speaketh, ever her wont is to cross his path.
It is thou art the horrible thing, who hast nor shame nor fear,
If in truth thou wilt dare to upraise against Zeus thy mighty spear!"
So uttered the fleetfoot Iris her message, and backward she sped :
Then to Athênê answered Hêrê the Queen, and she said :
"Out on it, child of the Aegis-wielder!—it is not I
Will consent that we war against Zeus for the men that be born but to die.
Let this one utterly perish, let that live out his span,
As their lot is : and whatso Allfather decreeth of blessing or ban
To Troy and her foes—it is meet that he judge 'twixt man and man."
So spake she, and backward she turned those thunderfoot horses again ;
And the Hours unyoked at her bidding the coursers of beautiful mane.
To the mangers ambrosia-heaped they tethered them, stabled in stall,
And the chariot leaned they against the shining forecourt-wall.
But the Goddesses twain sat down on their thrones of the fashioned gold
Amidst of the rest of the Gods, indignant and angry-souled.
But Zeus Allfather from Ida with chariot and steeds flew fast
To Olympus, and into the hall of the thronèd Gods he passed.
And the glorious Shaker of Earth unyoked the steeds for the King ;



On its pavement the chariot he set, and thereover the cloths did he fling.
And Zeus that speaketh in thunder went up to his golden seat,
And mighty Olympus shuddered and rocked beneath his feet.
But aloof from Kronion Athênê and Hêrê sat brooding alone:
Nothing they spake to Allfather, question they asked of him none.
But his spirit discerned their thoughts, and his scoff rang bitter-keen:
" For what cause thus be ye vexèd, Athênê and Hêrê the Queen?
Of a surety ye be not forwearied with toil of triumphant fight,
With destroying the Trojans, the folk that ye hate with ruthless spite!
In any wise, such is my might, and mine hands that none may abide,
That all the Gods in Olympus shall wrest not my purpose aside.
But ye—ha, trembling came on the limbs of glorious mould
Ere ye dared to look in on the battle, the fearful deeds to behold!
For this will I tell ye, whose hands had accomplished my threat full well,
Not on your chariot uplifted, O rebels that thunderbolts quell,
Had ye won to Olympus again, to the home where the Deathless dwell."
So spake he: Athênê and Hêrê in curbed wrath murmured low:
Anigh to each other they sat, and they plotted the Trojans' woe.
Now Athênê held her peace, and she answered him not a word,
Yet against Allfather within her the tameless anger stirred.
But the fury of Hêrê would nowise be pent in her breast, and she said:
" What hast thou to do saying this, O Kronos' son most dread?
Well know we that this thy prowess may nowise be overborne:
Yet for the sake of the Danaan heroes our spirits mourn,
Who must perish and fill up the cup of a doom of bitter pain.

Howbeit, since this is thy bidding, from battle will we refrain :
Yet will we put in the hearts of the Argives our counsel, that so
They may perish not all in the hour when the fire of thy wrath is aglow."
Answered and spake to her Zeus, and the Cloudrack-herder cried :
" Thou shalt see Kronion the prowess-triumphant with morning-tide
—Ha, thou shalt see, an thou wilt, Queen Hêrê the lovely eyed !—
Spreading ruin and wrack yet more through Achaia's war-host wide.
For the warfare of Hector the battle-stormer shall nowise be done
Or ever uprise by the galleys Peleus' fleetfoot son,
In the day when they strive by the sterns in the desperate battle-strain,
In the terrible stress of the struggle around Patroclus slain.
For thus is it doom-forespoken. Nothing I reck of thee
In thy wrath, not though to the nethermost parts of the earth and the sea
Thou descend, to the place where Iapetos sitteth, and Kronos withal,
On whom Hyperion the Sun-god's gladdening beams ne'er fall,
Never breezes refresh them, but Tartarus' pit is on every side :—
Though thither thou wander, nothing I care for thine angry pride,
For nothing that liveth is more unabashed than thou, I wot."
So spake he, but Hêrê the ivory-wristed answered him not.
Then plunged in the Ocean-stream the sun's broad-flashing light
Over the land corn-bounteous drawing the dark-palled night.
Sore loth were the Trojans when sank his splendour, but unto their foes
O welcome, O thrice-implored, the murky night uprose.
And Hector the glorious gathered the Trojans in council then :
By the swirling river aloof from the galleys he mustered his men,



In a spot where the face of the earth showed clear, unpolluted with dead.
And they leapt to the ground from their chariots to hearken the word to be said
Of Hector the Zeus-beloved, and his spear in his hand he bore,
His lance of cubits eleven, and lightning leapt before
From the brazen head thereof, and the compassing ring of gold.
And he leaned thereupon, and his voice o'er the ranks of the Trojans rolled:
"Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans, and outland war-array.
I had looked to destroy yon galleys and all the Achaians to-day:
And so unto Ilium the windy to turn in triumph again.
But the nightfall came too soon, which hath spared for a little from bane
Our foes and their ships hard down by the sea where the surf breaks white.
Now therefore we needs must yield to the high behest of the night,
And prepare us the meal of the even: unyoke the steeds fair-maned [sustained.
From the chariots, and cast them the food wherewithal shall their strength be
And bring ye forth of the city the goodly sheep and the kine
With such speed as ye may, and get you the soul-refreshing wine [take,
And the bread from your halls, and abundance of wood therewithal shall ye
To the end that the livelong night, till the Dawn from her mist-veil break,
We may burn full many a fire till the heavens shall be red with the glare,
Lest perchance in the night-tide the sons of Achaia with long-flowing hair
Should rush to their galleys to flee from us over the broad-ridging seas.
But beware lest untroubled they get them aboard of their ships, or at ease.
Let many an one have a dart for his nursing at home to keep,
Smitten by shaft from the string, or a keen-whetted javelin's leap,
As he springs on his ship, that all other may loathe with shuddering fears

To bring on the horse-quelling Trojans the battle's blood and tears. .
And let heralds proclaim through the city, and let the Zeus-loved say
That the stripling lads and the elders with temples hoary-grey
Shall camp on the God-built towers all round the leaguered wall.
And as for the women, let each of them kindle amidst of her hall
A mighty fire, and let all keep diligent watch and ward,
Lest an ambush enter the town while afar is her battle-guard.
Thus let it be, O heroes of Troy, as your captain hath cried ;
The rede that is good in this hour for our need, let it spoken abide,
And more will I say to the horse-quelling Trojans at morning-tide.
Unto Zeus and to all the Gods with a hopeful heart I pray
To chase these fate-driven dogs from our fatherland far away,
Whom the fates to their doom in the black ships drive in disarray.
Lo, thus will we guard us while over us pass the wings of the night :
We will gird us with harness of war with the first of the morning light,
And again by the hollow ships will we waken the keen-whetted fight.
I will know if Tydeus' son Diomedes the stalwart-grim
Shall thrust me aback from the ships to the walls, or I over him
Shall prevail with the brass, and shall win me his blood-stained battle-gear.
His manhood tomorn shall he know, if he dare to abide my spear
As onward it cometh :—nay, mid the first of the slain, I trow,
Stabbed shall he lie, with many a comrade around laid low,
When riseth the sun on the morrow. Would God I were even as sure
Deathless and ageless to live so long as the years endure,
And to be as Athênê honoured, or like to Apollo the King,



As the evil is sure that the day on the Argive host shall bring."

So Hector harangued them, and thundered the shouts of the Trojan folk.
Then their horses areek with the sweat of the battle they loosed from the yoke;
And with thongs to the chariots tethered they every man his steed.
Then brought they the fatling sheep and the kine from the city with speed;
And the wine that as honey is sweet to the soul did they bring for their need,
And bread from their halls, and the faggots in heaps they laid thereby;
And victims unblemished they burnt to the deathless abiders on high,
And the wind-waft lifted the sacrifice-reek* from the plain to the sky;
Sweet savour: but naught did the Deathless taste of the sacrifice,
Neither would they, for sorely was Ilium the holy abhorred in their eyes,
And Priam, and all the folk of the old king warfare-wise.

So there on the highways of battle with hearts uplifted they bode
Sitting the livelong night where the countless watchfires glowed.
And as when in the heaven the stars round the moon as she walketh in light
Glitter and flash through the breathless hush of the air of the night,
And out of the shadows the heights and the mountain-forelands start,
And the glens, and the heaven's abysses unfathomed are rifted apart,
And revealed are the uttermost star-hosts:—glad is the shepherd's heart;
So many the fires were that shone before Ilium 'twixt Xanthus' streams
And the galleys, while ever the Troyfolk fed those wavering gleams.
In the plain were there burning a thousand fires, and around each one
Sat fifty men, and the glare of the flames on their faces shone.
And the car-steeds champing the silvery barley and golden corn,
There as they stood by the chariots, waited the fair-throned morn.

*Or, "lifted the roast-reek up," if 548 and 550—552 be rejected as spurious.

BOOK IX.

How in vain with their gifts they essayed to appease the wrath of Achilles.

SO were the Troyfolk keeping their watch ; but Achaia's array
Were holden of Panic, the handmaid of palsy-numbed Dismay ;
And their mightiest all were stricken with heart-overmastering pain.
And even as the fish-fraught sea is upstirred by the storm-winds twain,
The North-wind and West-wind, that forth of their lair in the Thrace-land
Swoop suddenly down, and all in a moment the surge dark-sweeping [leaping
Uptosseth its crests, and in heaps the sea-tangle is hurled to the shore,
Even so were the souls in the bosoms Achaian disquieted sore.
But Atreides, stricken at heart with the mighty grief of a king,
Went bidding the clear-voiced heralds to call to the council-ring
The heroes Achaian—but every man by his name should they call,
Nor in any wise shout, and himself therein toiled more than all.
So they gathered, and sat down troubled, and there Agamemnon stood
Fast shedding the tears, as a spring dark-watered poureth its flood
When bursteth its sunless stream from the cleft of a lone steep scaur :



And heavily groaning he spake to the Argive chiefs of war:

"Friends, lords of the Argives, and captains of fight, unto you I declare
Kronion hath tangled my feet in folly's ruin-snare.
Ah cruel!—he promised me once, by his nod did he seal it withal,
That ere I returned I should cast down Ilium's goodly wall.
He hath fed me on lying delusions!—lo, how he biddeth me fly
With shame unto Argos—me, who have led those thousands to die!
Yea, this strange thing is the pleasure of Zeus the almighty, I trow,
Who hath brought down many a city's crown of pride full low,
And yet shall bring, for that none may withstand him, his doom to gainsay.
Come then, as my counsel shall be, even so let us all obey:
To our own dear fatherland-shore let us flee in the galleys away:—
We shall never hereafter win broad-wayed Troy-town for a prey."

So spake he, and no man answered a word, but amazement-hushed
Long sat they in silence, the sons of Achaia, with hearts grief-crushed,
Till the word from the battle-helper, the lord Diomedes, burst:

"Atreides, 'tis I will contend against this thy madness first
In council, O King, and thou shalt not be wroth, for that mine is the right.
Thou first in the midst of the Danaans spakest in scorn of my might:
Thou didst call me a battle-blencher, a dastard—yea, thy jeers
Be known unto all the Argives, the young and the stricken in years!
Now the son of the God dark-counselled by halves hath dowered thee:
Above all men he gave to thee honour of sceptre-majesty,
But battle-prowess he gave not, the crown of the mightiest ones.
What, Sir, and tak'st thou upon thee to count Achaia's sons

Dastards and battle-blenchers, according to that thy word?
But if thine heart, thine, unto shameful home-return be stirred,
Go, for the way is before thee, thy galleys are hard by the sea:
There stand they, the host of the ships that came from Mycenæ with thee!
But the rest of the long-haired sons of Achaia shall yet stay on
Till we utterly waste Troy-town;—yea, though all these would be gone,—
E'en let them flee in the ships to their own dear fatherland-home!—
Yet twain shall fight on, even I and Sthenelus, until the doom
Of Ilium's judgment be won, for in God's name now are we come."
 Then from the sons of Achaia went up a mighty shout,
As they hailed Diomedes the horse-queller's rede unblenching stout.
Then Nestor arose, and spake that lord of the battle-car:
 "O Tydeus' son, exceeding mighty thou art in war,
And counsel-peerless amidst of the heroes younger-born.
There is no man of all the Achaians shall hold thy rede in scorn,
Nor gainsay,—but the end of thy speech hath been left unspoken of thee.
Lo now, thou art even a youth; thou mightest be son unto me,
Yea, even my youngest of all; yet wise is thy counsel to-night
To the Argive kings, forasmuch as thy words be meet and right.
Come then, I am older than thou: from the thoughts that the years have stored
I will speak out; every whit shall be said, and this my word
Shall no man set at naught, no, not Agamemnon our lord.
Tribeless and lawless is he, and a hearthless man accurst,
Whose heart for the strife that teareth the bowels of his land is athirst!
But now let us heed the behest of the dark-palled night on-sweeping,



And prepare us our supper: let watchmen withal for the host's safe-keeping
Along by the deep-delved trench bestow them without the wall.
Even this is my rede to the youths: but thereafter be thou unto all
A leader, O Atreus' son, for that thou art the kingliest.
Spread thou a feast for the princes, for this beseemeth thee best:
Filled be thy tents with wine which the ships of Achaia's host
Bring over the broad sun-flashing waters from Thracia's coast.
All guest-receiving is thine, seeing many be under thy sway:
And when many in council be met, thou shalt do as that man shall say
Whose rede is the wisest: sore is the war-host's need, I trow,
Of counsel valiant and prudent, for hard by our galleys the foe
Be burning their countless fires,—what heart for this would joy?
This night, even this, shall deliver the host from bane, or destroy."

So spake he, the ancient of days, and they hearkened with heed and obeyed;
And forth of the camp went speeding the watchmen harness-arrayed:
With Nestor's son, Thrasymêdes, shepherd of folk, did they speed,
With Askalaphus others fared, and Ialmenus Arês' seed,
With Aphareus, Mêriones, and Dêïpyrus some be gone,
And other with Kreion's child, Lykomêdes the mighty one.
Seven were the captains of watchmen, and each man's warder-band
Was a hundred warriors, each with his long lance gripped in his hand.
So they hied them, and sat them down in the midst 'twixt trench and wall,
And they kindled a fire, and prepared them the meal of the evenfall.

But the counsel-chiefs of Achaia's host Atreides led
Unto his tent, and before them a plenteous feast he spread.

So they put forth their hands to eat of the meats on the board that lay.
But so soon as the craving for meat and for drink was done away,
For the weaving of counsel-weft did the ancient king uprise,
Nestor, whose rede in the days overpast seemed best in their eyes.
And he lifted his voice in their midst, and with kindly intent he spoke:
"Most glorious Atreus' son, Agamemnon lord of folk,
With thee will I end, and with thee will begin, for of many a land
Thou rulest the sons, and Zeus hath committed into thine hand
The sceptre and laws of a king, that thine heart may be careful for all:
Wherefore 'tis meet that thou speak, it is meet that thou hearken withal,
Yea, that thou bring to pass whatsoever excellent thought
Hath birth in another man's soul:—it is thine, whatsoe'er shall be wrought.
Lo, now will I utter the thing that seemeth the best in mine eyes,
For better counsel than this shall no man's heart devise,
Than the thought that hath lain in my soul from the days overpast until now,
Even from the hour when in anger, O Zeus-begotten, thou
Didst go and didst bear from the tent of Achilles Brisêïs the maid—
Not in any wise after my mind, for with earnest words I essayed
To turn thee therefrom, but thou, overborne by thy mood high-souled,
Didst dishonour a man most mighty, whom even the Deathless hold
In honour: his guerdon thou tookest and keepest: yet let us to-day,
Even now, take counsel, if haply his wrath may be charmed away
By the gifts that our hands shall bring, by the love that our lips shall say."
Answered and spake unto him Agamemnon the King again:
"Old sire, not false is the tale thou hast told of my madness-bane.



Fool-furious I was, I deny not:—better, I see it, is he
Whom Zeus holdeth dear to his heart than a great war-company,
As now he hath favoured Achilles, and smitten Achaia's array.
But since in the hour of my bane my infatuate heart bare sway,
Fain would I win back his love with a recompense-price untold.
Lo, the tale of the glorious gifts in the midst of you all I unfold:—
Seven tripods that never were sullied of fire, ten talents of gold,
And flame-bright caldrons a score, and twelve steeds goodly to see,
Guerdon-winners whose hoofs beat music of victory.
No lackland wight were the man, neither scant were the treasure that shone
In his halls gold-gleaming, who called such guerdon-wealth his own
As the speed of my thunderfoot steeds for me in the race hath won.
Seven women withal will I give him, in fair work cunning to toil,
Lesbians, the which, when himself took Lesbos-town for a spoil,
I chose me; in beauty above all women-folk peerless were they;
These will I give him: with them shall be she that I reft away,
Brisêïs: thereto will I swear a mighty oath and dread
That never for love's embracing I gat me unto her bed,
As the children of men be wont, when man and maiden wed.
All these will I give forthright; and if Priam's mighty wall
By the grace of the Gods hereafter beneath our hands shall fall,
Let him come when the host is dividing the spoil in the triumphing day,
And heap up his galley with gold as he will and with brass of the prey.
Yea, twenty daughters of Troy let him choose, of all that therein
Be fairest next unto Helen the peerless Argive Queen.

And when Argos, the choice of the land of Achaia, again shall be won,
He shall wed with my child ; I will honour him even as Orestes my son,
The lad that in stintless abundance is nurtured royally.
Behold three daughters have I in my fair-built halls oversea,
Chrysothemis, Laodikê, and Iphianassa withal :
Whichso he will let him lead for his bride unto Peleus' hall,
Neither pay me the bride-price : yea, and a dower of mine hand shall she have,
Such treasure as never a father yet with his daughter gave.
Seven cities to wit will I give him, stately and fair to be seen,
Kardamylê, Enopê, Hirê, with pastures ever green,
Pherae the hallowed, Antheia deep-meadowed on every hand,
Aipeia the lovely-lying, and Pedasus' vine-gladdened land,
All nigh to the sea, on the borders of Pylos the city of sand.
Sheep-flocks enow have the burghers thereof, and herds of kine,
And with gifts, as men worship a God, shall they render him honour divine,
And shall bring rich tribute, bowing them under his sceptred sway.
All this will I surely fulfil if he turn from his anger away.
Let him yield : unrelenting is none nor unyielding save Hades, I wis ;
Wherefore most hateful of Gods to the children of men he is.
Yea, let him give place unto me as a king, for that higher than he
Am I set, and as yieldeth the young to the old let him yield unto me."
Made answer Gerenia's horseman, and Nestor the ancient spoke :
" Atreides the high-renowned, Agamemnon lord of folk,
The gifts thou wouldst give to Achilles the King no man may contemn.
Come then, let us take to us chosen men, let us hasten them



To go to the tent of Achilles Peleus' son straightway.
Now whomso I choose for our helping, he shall not say us nay:—
Foremost of all let Phoinix the Zeus-belovéd lead,
And with him shall be Aias the giant, and godlike Odysseus, to plead;
And let Odius with these, and Eurybates, thither as heralds fare.
Now bring for our hands the water, proclaim ye the hush for our prayer,
To the end we may cry unto Zeus, if perchance he will pity and spare."
So spake he, and good in the eyes of them all was the ancient's word.
And the heralds brought them water, and over their hands they poured;
And the mixing bowls by the boys with the banquet-wine were crowned,
And to all, from the right to the left, they filled the goblets round.
So when they had poured the libation, and drunk to their hearts' content,
Forth of the tent of Atreus' son Agamemnon they went.
But still did Gerenia's horseman charge them with diligent heed,
Ever laying on this one and that, but most on Odysseus, his rede,
How they should strive to prevail with Peleus' noble seed.
By the thunderous-plunging sea they paced the sighing sands
With many a prayer to the Earth-shaking King, the Girder of Lands,
That lightly the mighty spirit might yield of Aiakus' son.
So when to the tents and the ships of the Myrmidon host they won,
They found him delighting his soul as rang to the sweep of his hand
His beautiful rich-wrought lyre with a silver cross-bar spanned,
Which he chose from the spoils of the war when he smote Eëtion's town.
Sweetly it rang as he sang old deeds of hero-renown.
And overagainst him Patroclus sat, and he held his peace,

Spell-bound till the glorious lay of Aiakus' son should cease.
So drew they anigh him, and foremost Odysseus the godlike went,
And before him they stood, and sprang to his feet in astonishment
Achilles, yet holding the lyre in his hand as he left his seat;
Therewithal did Patroclus, beholding the heroes, uprise to his feet.
Then greeted them well fleet-footed Achilles, and thus spake he:
"All hail!—ye be friends—good sooth there is need that such should be!—
Who, for all my wrath, of the host of Achaia be dearest to me."
Then strode he, Achilles the godlike, before, to his tent as they hied;
And he caused them to rest upon couches and bright rugs purple-dyed,
And he spake forthright to Patroclus, while yet he abode at his side:
"A bowl yet greater, O son of Menoitius, set thou up:
Let the wine be stronger-mingled, and deal unto each man a cup;
For the dearest of men this night beneath my pavilion shall sup."
He spake, and Patroclus hearkened to do his friend's desire.
Down flung he a mighty fleshing-block in the light of the fire;
Thereon hath he laid the backs of a fatling goat and a sheep,
And a huge boar's chine, with the fat's abundant fold clothed deep.
Then Automedon held, and Achilles the godlike carved the meats,
And deftly he cut them in pieces, and set the same on the spits.
Then a mighty flame did the godlike son of Menoitius raise.
And so soon as the fire burned low, and abated the leaping blaze,
The red-glowing embers he levelled, and stretched the spits thereover,
On the spit-racks laid, and with sprinkling of holy salt did he cover.
So when he had roasted the flesh, and into the chargers had poured,



Patroclus took of the bread, and he dealt it about the board
In beautiful maunds, and Achilles portioned the meats unto all.
Then, facing Odysseus the godlike, against the further wall
Sat hero Achilles, and spake to Patroclus his comrade true
To sacrifice, and he cast on the fire the high Gods' due.
So they put forth their hands to eat of the meats on the board that lay.
But so soon as the craving for meat and for drink had been done away,
Then Aias to Phoinix nodded: Odysseus marked that sign,
And he filled up a goblet, and pledged Achilles the King in the wine:
"All hail unto thee, Achilles: the banquet's abundant cheer
We lack not in Atreus' son Agamemnon's tent, nor here;
For with stintless dainties ever the feastful board is dight.
But not for the pleasant banquet our hearts are careful to-night.
But we look on affliction exceeding heavy, O fostered of Zeus,
And we fear, and we know not whether we yet shall save or lose
The fair-benched galleys, except thou clothe thee with battle-might:
For anigh to the ships and the compassing rampart the camp is pight
Of the Trojans lofty-souled and their far-famed battle-aid.
They have kindled their countless watch-fires, they deem they shall not be stayed
Till down on the dark-hulled galleys in onset triumphant they dash.
And Zeus Kronion is showing them signs by his levin-flash
To rightward, and Hector is storming with battle-rage high-wrought
In horrible madness: he trusteth in Zeus, and he careth naught
Or for men or for Gods; overmastering frenzy hath seized upon him.
And he prayeth that dawn may shine with speed on the earth-ways dim;

For he sweareth to hew from the galleys the ensign-crests of the same,
And he sweareth to burn their hulls with ruthless-ravening flame,
And amidst them to slay the Achaians as 'wildered they gasp mid the smoke.
Sorely afraid in my spirit am I lest the threats that he spoke
May yet be fulfilled of the Gods, and our weird at the last may be
To perish in Troy far off from Argos the horse-fed lea.
Up then, if thy will be to save Achaia's fainting sons,
Though late, from the onset-thunder of Troyland's mighty ones.
Thyself shalt have anguish of ruth thereafter: no help is at all,
Neither healing, for mischief done. But long ere such befall,
O bethink thee to turn from the Danaans ruin's evil day!
O friend, thou wast charged of thy sire—ah, surely did Peleus say,
In the hour when he sent thee from Phthia for King Agamemnon to fight,
'My son, Athênê and Hêrê shall give thee battle-might,
If such be their pleasure, but be it for thee to rein in thy breast
Thy mood high-hearted, for verily lovingkindness is best,
And refrain thee from strife, from the worker of bane, and the Argives shall raise
The higher thy name and thy fame, both the young and the ancient of days.'
So charged thee the old man, but ah, thou forgettest: yet fling from thee, fling,
Even now, heart-cankering anger. Lo, Agamemnon the King
Maketh proffer of worthy gifts, if thou turn from thine anger away.
Prithee hearken to me, I will set forth all that goodly array
Of the peace-gifts promised to thee in the tent of the King of Men:—
Seven tripods unsullied of fire, and talents of red gold ten,
And flame-bright caldrons a score, and twelve steeds stately to see,



Guerdon-winners whose hoofs beat music of victory.
No lackland wight were the man, neither scant were the treasures that shone
In his halls gold-gleaming, who called such guerdon-wealth his own
As the speed of the thunderfoot steeds of the King in the races hath won.
Seven women withal will he give thee, in fair work cunning to toil,
Lesbians, the which, when thyself tookest Lesbos-town for a spoil,
He chose him; in beauty above all womenfolk peerless were they.
These will he give thee: with them shall be she that he reft away,
Brisêïs: thereto will he swear a mighty oath and dread
That never for love's embracing he gat him unto her bed,
As the loving be wont, O King, when man and maiden wed.
All these shall be thine forthright; and if Priam's mighty wall
By the grace of the Gods hereafter beneath our hands shall fall,
Come thou when the host is dividing the spoil in the triumphing day,
And heap up thy galley with gold as thou wilt and with brass of the prey.
Yea, twenty daughters of Troy shalt thou choose thee, of all that therein
Be fairest next unto Helen the peerless Argive Queen.
And when Argos, the choice of the land of Achaia, again shall be won,
Thou shalt wed with his child, he will honour thee even as Orestes his son,
The lad that in stintless abundance is nurtured royally.
Behold, three daughters he hath in his fair-built halls oversea,
Chrysothemis, Laodikê, and Iphianassa withal:
Whichso thou wilt shalt thou lead for thy bride unto Peleus' hall,
Neither pay him the bride-price: yea, and a dower of his hand shall she have,
Such treasure as never a father yet with his daughter gave.

Seven cities to wit will he give thee, stately and fair to be seen,
Kardamylê, Enopê, Hirê with pastures ever green,
Pherae the hallowed, Antheia deep-meadowed on every hand,
Aipeia the lovely-lying, and Pedasus' vine-gladdened land,
All nigh to the sea, on the borders of Pylos the city of sand.
Sheep-flocks enow have the burghers thereof, and herds of kine ;
And with gifts, as men worship a God, shall they render thee honour divine,
And shall bring rich tribute, bowing them under thy sceptred sway.
All this will he surely fulfil if thou turn from thine anger away.
But if Atreus' son be utterly loathed of thy soul this day,
Even he and his gifts, yet pity the rest of Achaia's array,
Which be fainting throughout the host : as a God's shall they honour thy name,
For of these shalt thou win of a truth exceeding glorious fame.
Even Hector thou now couldest slay : he would draw full nigh unto thee.
He is filled with baleful madness, he deemeth that none such as he
Is found mid the Danaan men whom the galleys bare oversea."

Made answer Achilles to him, and the fleetfoot hero replied :
" O scion of Zeus and Laertes, Odysseus in wiles deep-tried,
Clear-spoken this word of mine answer must be, and I may not feign ;
I must tell you the thought of my soul and the thing that shall surely remain,
Lest ye tarry and tarry with fawning words to tempt me in vain.
For hateful to me is the man as the very gates of Death
Who hideth a thing in his heart that is not as the thing that he saith.
But for me, I will utter the thing that I deem shall be best in the end :—
Not me shall the son of Atreus, the King Agamemnon, bend,



Nor the rest of the Danaan men : for a thankless toil hath it been
To grapple with foes evermore in the battle sleepless-keen.
One share hath the home-abider, and he that hath fought with his might :
In the selfsame honour the dastard is held, and the valiant in fight :
And how dieth the deedless man ?—as the deed-crowned heroes die.
Of my travail and all my vexation of spirit no profit have I :
Naught boots it that ever in battle I set my life at stake.
And even as a bird to her callow nestling brood doth take
Each morsel she winneth, the while herself is in sorriest plight,
Even so was I wont to watch through many a sleepless night,
And I bore the brunt of the battle of many a bloody day,
Warring with men with intent to win their wives for a prey.
Twelve fencèd cities of men in sea-raid I took for a spoil,
Yea, and by land eleven on Troyland's deep-loamed soil ;
And out of them all did I gather their treasures many and brave,
And to Atreus' son Agamemnon I bare them all and gave.
And he, he tarried behind by the sea-swift ships of the host,
And received them : a few did he portion to others ; he kept the most.
Other guerdons of honour he wont to give unto captain and king,
And they keep them, but me alone of Achaia's gathering
Hath he robbed, he hath gotten my heart's delight :—let him take his joy
In her arms ! But why must the Argives fight with the sons of Troy ?
Why gathered Atreides the host and led them on this war-quest ?
Was it not for the winning of Helen the Queen, the beautiful-tressed ?
What then, amongst menfolk shall none save Atreus' sons be found

That love their wives?—tush, whoso is good and whose heart is sound
Loveth his own, and he cherisheth, even as I held dear,
Dear from my heart, this maid, what though she were spoil of my spear.
Now since he hath torn from mine hands my prize, and deceived me herein,
No more let him tempt me—I know him: my trust shall he never win.
But let him, Odysseus, with thee and the kings that will trust the liar,
Take counsel how to deliver the ships from the foemen's fire.
Good sooth, he hath fashioned full many a deed without mine aid.
O yea, he hath built him a wall, and a trench thereby hath he made;
Wide is it and deep, and therein is the fence of his stakes arrayed.
Yet the might of the manslaying Hector not even so hath he stayed.
Howbeit while yet with the host of Achaia I fared to the war,
Never dared Hector his battle array from the wall afar.
No farther he came than the Skaian gate and the oak thereby.
There once he abode me, and scarce from mine onset alive did he fly.
But now, since my will is to fight not with Hector the godlike again,
Tomorn unto Zeus and the rest of the Gods will I sacrifice; then
I will run my galleys asea, and with goodly freight will I stow;
Thou shalt see, if thou wilt, if thou carest for suchlike gallant show,
Right early my ships o'er the fish-fraught Hellespont sailing away,
And my comrades therein, full fain of the dashing oar's swift play.
And if fair-breathed winds be vouchsafed of the Shaker of the Land,
On the third day hence shall I win unto deep-loamed Phthia's strand.
Much wealth have I there, which I left when on this ill quest I came;
Fine gold moreover from hence, and the copper's ruddy flame,



And fair-girt women, and hoary steel, will I bear oversea,
Yea, all that by lot was mine: but the prize that he gave unto me
Lord Agamemnon from me like a tyrant hath taken away,
Even Atreus' son. Now therefore proclaim all this that I say—
Openly tell it, that all may be indignation-stirred,
If he hopeth to cheat any Danaan yet with deceitful word,
Who is ever with impudence clad: yet he will not dare, I wis,
Dog-shameless albeit he be, to look in my face after this.
I will frame not with him war-counsel, nor fashion the deeds of war.
He hath wholly deceived me, and played the villain, and me never more
With words shall he cozen: suffice him the past: in peace let him go
To his ruin: the Counsel-father hath stolen his wits, I trow.
Hateful to me are his gifts, and I hold him at one straw's fee.
Not though he would give ten, twenty-fold so much unto me [hand,
As the wealth that he hath, and the wealth that may come otherwhence to his
Not all that Orchomenus gathers, nor Thebes in Egypt-land,
The city that hath in the halls of her palaces treasure untold,—
She hath gates five-score, and through every gate of the war-fenced hold
March forth five hundred men with the steed and the battle-car,—
Though his gifts were in number as sands of the sea or as dust-motes are,
Not even so Agamemnon should bend my purpose again
Till he pay me the uttermost price of my grievous honour-stain.
With a daughter of Atreus' son Agamemnon I wed not, I,
Though with Aphroditê the Golden in beauty his child should vie,
And in cunning work of the loom with Athênê the flashing-eyed.

Not I—let him choose him another Achaian lord for the bride,
Ay, let one worthy to mate her, a kinglier wooer, come!
If the Gods shall preserve me in life, if again I shall win to mine home,
Peleus himself thereafter shall find out a wife for his son.
In Hellas and Phthia be maidens Achaian many an one,
Daughters of princes the champion-warders of tower and wall.
For my dear-loved wife will I take whichsoever I will of them all.
There many a time and oft of my princely heart was I moved
To woo me and win me a bride, a true wife meet to be loved,
And to take my joy of the wealth by the old man Peleus stored;
For as nothing-worth in the balance with life I account that hoard
That in Ilium lay, in the fair-built city, as telleth the tale,
In the days of peace, ere came Achaia's sons for her bale,
Neither all that the rock-hewn threshold of Phoebus Apollo doth keep
In the fane of the Archer-god, on Pytho's craggy steep.
For kine may ye get you in foray, and flocks of goodly sheep;
There be tripods to win, and the bright-maned war-steed's gallant head:
But neither by foray nor price returneth the life to the dead,
When once through the fence of the teeth the soul of a man hath fled.
For my mother the Goddess Thetis the silver-footed saith
That of twofold fates am I onward thrust to the bourne of death.
If here I abide and battle to win the Trojans' town,
Lost is mine home-return, but unfading is my renown.
But and if to mine own dear country I hie me, to Phthia's strand,
Lost is my fair renown, but my days shall be long in the land,



And it shall not be soon that my feet at the goal of death shall stand.
Yea, to the rest of the host withal would I utter my rede,
That homeward ye sail, for your expectation never shall speed,
That Ilium the steep should be won, for that far-seeing Zeus stretcheth out
His hand for her shield, and the hearts of her folk be uplifted and stout.
But ye to the lords of the host of Achaia go and declare
My message,—for this is the office that ambassage-elders bear,—
To devise in their hearts new counsel, and find them a better way,
Such as shall save them their ships and the lives of Achaia's array
By the hollow ships, forasmuch as this hath availed them naught
Which of late they devised, for the flame of mine anger their ruin hath wrought.
But here let Phoinix abide, let him lie in my tent this night,
And so to our fatherland-home shall he sail with the morning's light,
If such be his will, but I bear him not hence in his own despite."
So did he speak, and in silence hushed were they all as they heard,
Aghast at his speech, for he cried an exceeding vehement word.
But at last made answer Phoinix the chariot-champion hoar,
Sudden-weeping, for trembled his heart for the sons of Achaia sore:
" O glorious Achilles, if this be thy very soul's desire
To return, if thou wilt not in any wise save from the ravening fire
The sea-swift ships, for the fierceness of wrath that hath entered thine heart,
How dare I be left alone, my son, if thou wilt depart?
For with thee was I sent of the car-borne Peleus the hoary-grey
In the hour when from Phthia to King Agamemnon he sent thee away,
When thou wert but a child, in the shock of the battle untried as yet,

Or the council-ring, where the wise amid princes on high be set.
Wherefore he sent me forth for to teach thee all this lore,
To make thee a prince in counsel, a doer of deeds of war.
Therefore, my son, my beloved, to tarry forlorn of thee
Could I nowise endure, nay, not though a God would pledge him to me
To strip me of eld, and to clothe me with youth-tide's goodlihead,
As I was when at first from Hellas the land of the lovely I fled
From the storm of the anger of Ormenus' son, of Amyntor my sire,
When because of his leman the beautiful-tressed I had kindled his ire.
For he loved her himself, and his true-wed wife did he set at naught
Even my mother; and me evermore by my knees she besought
To go in to her first, that his leman might loathe him, the hoary-old.
So I hearkened and did, and the tale ere long to my father was told;
And he bitterly cursed me, and loud to the hateful Avengers he prayed
That never upon his knees might prattling babe be laid
Begotten of me, and the Gods fulfilled that curse on my head,
Even Zeus of the Underworld, and Persephonê's majesty dread.
Yea, and I purposed to slay him for this with the keen-whetted spear:
But one of the Deathless assuaged my fury, and put me in fear
Of the speech of a people indignant, a nation's mocking breath,
Lest Achaia should call me the man blood-stained with a father's death.
But the fire in mine heart burned ever, my spirit would nowise be won
In an angry father's halls hate-haunted to linger on.
But my friends sore-pleading around me came, and the men of my kin:
So these constrained me to bide for a space those halls within.



And goodly sheep full many, and trailfoot wreath-horned kine
Did they slay, and the fat-enfolded carcase of many a swine
Stretched they for the singeing athwart the Fire-god's fervent glow;
And out of the old man's jars did the wine in abundance flow.
So for nine nights' space round about me, all through the livelong night,
Changing about did they watch me, and never was quenched the light
Of the fires: 'neath the colonnade of the fenced court blazed one;
In the porchway in front of the doors of my chamber another shone.
But it came to pass, when the tenth in blackness of darkness fell,
That I burst the doors of my chamber, massy and bolt-gripped well,
And I passed forth thence, and I leapt the fence of the courtyard wall
Lightly; was none that beheld me, nor watcher nor handmaid thrall;
And fleeing afar o'er the wide-spreading lawnlands of Hellas I roamed
Till I came to the mother of sheep, unto Phthia's soil deep-loamed,
Unto Peleus the king; and he welcomed the stranger with kindly cheer;
And he loved me like as a father holdeth his own son dear,
His darling, his only-begotten, the heir to his wealth and his land;
And he made me rich, and he gave much people into mine hand.
So I, the Dolopians' king, on the marches of Phthia abode.
And I reared thee to this thy greatness, Achilles like to a God.
From my soul did I love thee, for thou with none other save only with me
Wouldst sit at thy meat in the halls, or go to the banquet's glee.
Ay, naught would content thee but Phoinix' knees for thy banqueting seat,
And his hand to put to thy lips the wine and the savoury meat.
And often the breast of my tunic was drenched and stain-defiled,

As suddenly spirted the wine from the helpless lips of the child.
So bare I the burden of travail and toil for my darling's need,
Bethinking me how that the Gods had vouchsafed unto me no seed
Of my body: but thee, Achilles, O godlike fair and strong,
I accounted my son, my defender thereafter from shame and wrong.
Nay, Achilles, do thou overmaster thy pride: thou oughtest not, thou,
To cherish a ruthless spirit: the very Gods can bow,—
Though more excellent majesty, mightier honour and strength, be theirs,—
Even these by the incense upwafted, by wrath-assuaging prayers,
By libation and sacrifice-reek do men unto mercy win,
Whoso shall make supplication because of transgression and sin.
For Prayers be the daughters of Him of the majesty-crownèd head;
Halt are they and wrinkled, with eyes ever glancing askance as in dread,
And aye in the steps of Sin do they follow with heedful tread.
But mighty and fleetfoot is Sin, whereby she outrunneth them all
By far, and through all the earth she causeth to stumble and fall
The children of men, and the Prayers follow after with balm for their bruise.
Whosoe'er in the day of their coming revereth the daughters of Zeus,
Greatly they bless him, and hearken when he in his need shall pray.
But if any deny their petition, and stubbornly say them nay,
Then go they and cry to Kronion that Sin may meet that one
In the way, that he stumble and fall, and atone for the wrong he hath done.
O then to the Daughters of Zeus, Achilles, render thou
The homage that causeth the hearts of the noblest of earth to bow!
If Atreides had offered not gifts, neither spoken of others in store,



But in malice and wrath hot-burning continued evermore,
It is not I that would bid thee to cast thine anger from thee,
And stand up for the Argives' help, whatsoever their need might be.
But he giveth thee much forthright, and more remaineth behind,
And to plead with thee hath he sent the princeliest men he may find
In Achaia's host, the men that of all the Argive array
Be dearest to thee; then spurn not thou their petition away,
Nor their feet: howbeit ere this could none on thy wrath cry shame.
Even so have we heard the story of heroes of olden fame;
For they bare them as thou, when swelled the stormy anger-tide;
Yet might they by presents be won, and by pleadings be pacified.
I mind me of deeds overpast, of a tale of the times of old,
How it befell: in the midst of you all now let it be told.
The Kurêtes and battle-biding men of Aetolia warred
For Kalydon's sake, and many a hero was slain by the sword,
While fought Aetolia's sons to deliver that lovely town,
While warred the Kurêtes to cast it battle-wasted down.
For Artemis golden-throned with her plague had smitten them sore
In her anger that Oineus had rendered her naught of his harvest-store;
But to all the rest of the Gods was the hecatomb-banquet brought,
To the daughter of Zeus most high alone he sacrificed not,
Forgetting, or heedless perchance—his spirit was folly-distraught.
And for this cause wroth was the Arrow-triumphant, the seed divine;
And she sent her avenger, a white-tushed boar, a monster of swine,
Which made havoc of Oineus' land, of the promise of corn and wine:

And many a stately orchard-tree did the monster uproot,
And low on the ground he cast their blossomed hope of fruit.
But of Oineus' son Meleager that terror of earth was slain,
For from many a city he gathered him hunters slaughter-fain,
And hounds: for the hands of a few might nowise lay him low,
So huge was the beast, and many he sped to the pyres of woe.
Then Artemis stirred up strife for his sake and battle-broil,
For the sake of the wild boar's head and the great hide's shaggy spoil,
Between the Kurêtes and sons of Aetolia mighty of heart.
Now while Arês-beloved Meleager in battle played his part,
So long the Kurêtes were hardly bestead, and they did not dare
To abide him without their rampart, for all that so many they were.
But when anger gat hold on the hero, such as is wont to rise
In the bosoms of others, albeit in spirit never so wise,
Then it was so, that wrathful at heart with his mother, Althaia's son
Lay by his wedded wife, Kleopatra the lovely one,
The child of Marpessa, Evênus' daughter of ankles slim,
And of Idas:—in might no earth-abider was like unto him
In the days of old—yea, he grasped for the battle his bow, and defied
Phoebus Apollo the King, for the lovely-ankled bride.
But the child Kleopatra was called by another name beside
In the halls of her father and mother—'our Halkyonê!' they cried,
For that like to the woe-stricken halcyon so did her mother mourn
When of Phoebus Far-darter Apollo from Idas' arms she was torn.
By her side, on the heart-stinging rage of his soul heavy-brooding, he lay,



Wroth for the curse of his mother, who cried to the Gods in the day
Of her anguish of soul for the death of her brother, and moaned her request,
Wild-beating with passionate hands on the earth's all-fostering breast,
Shrieking on Hades, and crying in dread Persephonê's ears,
On her knees as she grovelled, and wet grew the folds of her bosom with tears,
That her son might be given to death ; and Erinnys from Erebus heard,
The demon that walketh in darkness, the heart with relenting unstirred.
But now at their gates was there clamour of onset, the stones crashed loud
As they hailed on the towers : and to him Aetolia's elders bowed, to rise
And the chief of the priests of the Gods did they send, and they prayed him
And defend them, yea, and they pledged them to give to him gifts of price,
Even the fat of the land of Kalydon's lovely plain ;
There bade they the hero choose him a passing-fair domain
Of fifty acres,—the half was the slope of the vine-clad hill,
And the half was the treeless tilthland, to cut from the plain at his will.
And Oineus the ancient, the war-steed-smiter, besought him sore,
As he stood on the threshold-stone of his high-built chamber door,
Shaking the leaves thereof, and bowing a suppliant knee ;
And his mother the Queen and his sisters besought him earnestly.
But he hardened his heart yet more : then prayed him the true and tried,
His war-fellows trusty and dear beyond all others beside.
But for all this would not the wrath of his spirit be turned away,
Till the slingstones battered his very chamber, the Kurete array
Swarmed over the towers, and they set them to burn that mighty town.
Then at the feet of the hero his fair-robed wife fell down,

And with weeping besought him, and put him in mind of all the woes,
The horrors that light on a folk whose city is ta'en of their foes,
When they slaughter the men, when the burg is wasted with ravening flame,
When strangers are haling young children to thraldom, fair women to shame.
And his spirit was kindled within him to hear that evil tale,
And he gat him up, and arrayed his body in sunbright mail.
So did he shield the Aetolian folk from the day of their bale,
When melted his wrath into ruth ; yet never the gifts they gave,
So many and fair ; yet even the thankless ones did he save.
But be not thou thus-minded : may no overmastering fate
Thitherward turn thee, belovèd : late shall it be, o'erlate,
When the ships are aflame, to deliver them : come for the gifts' sake then,
For even as a God shall they honour thee, all the Achaian men.
But and if without gift-atonement thou enter the murderous fight,
Less shall thine honour be then, though quelled be the war by thy might."

Then to the ancient Achilles the fleetfoot made reply :
" Grey father Phoinix, thou fostered of Zeus, I need not, I,
Such honour,—I have been honoured by doom of Zeus's will ;
And this shall abide upon me beside the swift ships still,
While stirreth the breath in my breast, and my limbs may play their part.
This thing will I tell thee moreover, and thou lay it up in thine heart :
Trouble not thou my soul with lamenting and mourning and woe,
Showing kindness to Atreus' son : it beseemeth not thee, I trow,
To love him, lest thou be hated of him that loveth thee.
It were best that with me thou vex whosoever vexeth me.



Share kingship with me, and the half of my worship and my renown :
And the tidings shall these bear back ; but abide thou here, lie down
On a couch soft-spread, and so soon as the rose-flushed Dawn shall appear
Will we take thought to return to our own, or to tarry here."
He spake, and he bent his brows to Patroclus silently
To spread for Phoinix the thick-strewn couch, that the others thereby
Might be moved to depart from the tent. Then Aias, Telamon's son,
Brake forth in the midst of them all, and spake that godlike one :
" O Zeus-born son of Laertes, Odysseus shiftful at need,
Let us go, for I ween that the end of our message shall nowise speed
To be brought to fulfilment this day ; but now must we hasten and bear
To the Danaan men the tale of our faring, how evil soe'er ;
For I ween they be sitting and waiting us now : but Achilles hath turned
To tameless fury the spirit of might in his breast that burned.
On his friends' lovingkindness he looketh not back in his stiff-necked pride,
On the love by the galleys that crowned him far above all beside.
O pitiless !—lo, from the hand that a brother's blood hath defiled
One taketh atonement for blood, and the price for a murdered child,
So that for ransom untold the slayer in peace may dwell,
And curbed is the heart of the wronged, and his spirit's purpose fell,
When he taketh the price :—but a vengeance-thirst that nothing can slake
The Gods have set in thy breast for naught but a damsel's sake !
Lo, now do we offer thee seven, and they the fairest on earth,
Many gifts therewithal :—nay then, in thine heart let ruth have birth,
And have thou respect to thine hall : behold, thy guests we are

From the Danaan throng: we would fain be nearest to thee by far
And dearest of all the men of Achaia's host of war."
Then unto him fleet-footed Achilles made answer and spoke:
"Aias the Zeus-born, Telamon's scion, chieftain of folk,
Well nigh as sayeth mine own soul, so hast thou spoken all;
Howbeit mine heart yet swelleth with rage, whensoe'er I recall
Those deeds, how Atreides amidst of the Argives wrought my shame,
As though he had dealt with an alien wretch without honour or name!
But now go ye with mine answer, and tell them the word that I say:
I will think not of blood-drenched battle, nor get me up to the fray,
Or ever the son of the war-wise Priam, Hector divine,
Shall win to the tents and the ships of the Myrmidon battle-line,
Slaying the Argive men, and shall smirch our galleys with fire.
But about my tent and my galley shall Hector's grim desire
Be assuaged, and his battle-onset, I ween, shall come not nigher."
Then raised each man the double-chalice cup to his lips,
And they poured to the Gods, and they hied them, Odysseus first, to the ships.
But Patroclus unto the henchmen and handmaids spake his behest
Swiftly to spread the thick-strewn couch for Phoinix' rest. [said,
And they hearkened with heed, and they spread the couch as the hero had
That of fleeces and rugs and of linen soft as down was the bed.
There laid him the ancient to rest, and abode the dawn of day.
In the innermost part of his stately pavilion Achilles lay;
And beside him a woman, the captive he brought from Lemnos-town,
Phorbas' child, Diomêdê the beautiful-cheeked, lay down.

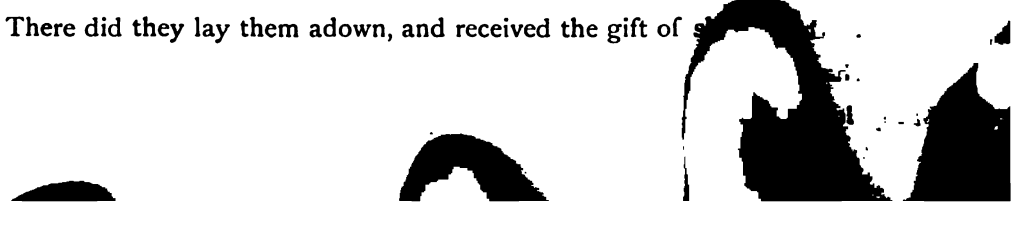




And Patroclus lay on the further side, and with him withal
Was fair-girt Iphis; Achilles had given that war-won thrall
When he took steep Skyros, and scaled Enyeus' crag-built wall.
But when herald and chief to the tent of Atreus' son drew nigh,
Up rose the sons of Achaia with golden cups held high,
And they pledged them, this man and that, and they asked of their tidings then;
But the first that questioned was Lord Agamemnon, the King of Men:
"Come, tell me, O glorious Odysseus, Achaia's crown of fame,—
Is it so, that he willeth to shield our ships from the ravening flame?
Or doth he refuse, and doth rage in his haughty spirit abide?"
Answered and spake unto him Odysseus, the man toil-tried:
"Agamemnon King of Men, far-famous Atreus' son,
He refuseth to quench his wrath-flame, but more than in days bygone
Is he filled with fury, yea, and of thee and thy gifts will he none.
He biddeth that thou thyself with thine Argive warrior-band
Take thought to deliver the ships and the men of Achaia-land.
But himself hath threatened, so soon as appeareth the dawn of day,
To drag his fair-benched, wave-rocked galleys asea through the spray.
Yea, to the rest of our host, said he, would he give this rede,
Homeward to sail, for that never your expectation should speed
That Ilium the steep should be won, for that far-seeing Zeus stretcheth out
His hand for her shield, and the hearts of her folk be uplifted and stout.
So spake he, and these which followed with me shall be witness to it,
Even Aias, and yonder heralds twain, men prudent of wit.
But Phoinix the old at Achilles' behest there lieth this night,



To the end he may go with him in the galleys with morning light
To his fatherland-home, if he will, but not in his own despite."
So did he speak, and in silence hushed were they all as they heard,
Aghast at his tale, at Achilles' grim and vehement word.
So long time sat the sons of Achaia in speechless grief,
Till the battle-helper arose, and cried Diomedes the chief:
"Agamemnon, ruler of men, far-famous Atreus' seed,
Thou shouldst nowise have prayed unto Peleus' princely son in thy need,
Proffering gifts untold: high-stomached he was heretofore,
But now hath his spirit been pride-uplifted of thee yet more.
Go to, we will let be him: peradventure the man will go,
Peradventure remain: in that hour shall he fight, when biddeth him so
The soul in his breast, and a God uprouseth him on to the fray.
But come ye, as I shall speak, even so let us all obey:—
Now get ye unto your rest, since cheered be your hearts with food
And with wine, for herein is your strength and your battle-hardihood.
But so soon as the beautiful Dawn rose-fingered shall shine from afar,
Swiftly in front of the ships range hero and battle-car,
Cheering them on, and thyself in the forefront be found of the war."
So did he speak, and shouted the princes with one accord
Praising the rede of the strong Diomedes, the horse-quelling lord.
So they poured the libation, and passed each one to his tent by the deep,
There did they lay them adown, and received the gift of [illegible]





BOOK X.

Of the slaughter wrought in the night by Tydeus' son and Odysseus.

THERE by the galleys the rest of the chiefs of Achaia's array
Slept through the night, by slumber soft overborne as they lay.
But on Atreus' son Agamemnon the shepherd of folk pressed not
The sweet sleep-fetter, for still in his soul surged many a thought.
And as when the lord of Hêrê the fair-tressed lighteneth,
Making ready his deluging rains or the hail of his frozen breath,
Or the storm's white drift when the snowflakes be sifted the lealand o'er,
Or perchance the yawning jaws of bitter-ravening war;
So fast from his breast did the king Agamemnon the groans outpour,
From the depth of his heart, and within him his spirit lamented sore.
Whensoe'er on the plain far-stretching away unto Troy he gazed,
He marvelled at all those fires that afront of Ilium blazed,
Whence the music of flutes and of pipes and the clamour of warriors broke;
And whenso he turned him to look on the ships and Achaia's folk,
Many locks from his head by the roots did he tear, and to Zeus high-throned

He upheld them, the while his gallant heart full heavily groaned.
And thus, in the thoughts of his soul, him seemed it were best to be done,—
To hie him before all men unto Nestor Neleus' son,
If so be he might fashion in council with him some goodly rede
Which might be an averter of bale in the Danaans' bitter need.
And he rose from his couch, and he cast his tunic his breast around,
And under his glistening feet his beautiful sandals he bound.
And about him he casteth the hide of a lion of flamelike mane,
A forest-king tawny and huge, and his lance in his hand hath he ta'en.
Upon Lord Menelaus came trembling too: on his eyelids withal
Did slumber in no wise brood, in his fear lest mischief befall
The Argive men, who had come far over the sea for his sake
Unto Troy, to enkindle the battle, to bid the war-mood wake.
First over his broad deep chest a panther's hide hath he spread,
A spotted fell; thereafter he lifted and set on his head
His helmet of brass, and he grasped in his brawny hand the spear.
And he hied him to rouse up his brother, whose lordship far and near
Stretched over the Argives, and honoured he was as a God alway.
And he found him clothing his shoulders in goodly war-array
By the stern of his galley, and glad by his coming the king was made.
Then first unto him Menelaus the battle-helper said:
"Why art thou arming thee thus, dear brother? Art sending out
Some comrade this night for a spy on the Trojans? Sorely I doubt
No man shall be found to promise such desperate deed unto thee
As to go and to spy out the foemen, alone, and none but he,



Through the black dark night: sooth, dauntless of heart that man shall be."
Answered him Lord Agamemnon, and spake with care-bent brow:
"We have need, Menelaus, O fostered of Zeus, both I and thou,
Of helpful counsel to save and deliver from ruin and wrack
The host and the ships, since the purpose of Zeus is now turned back.
His soul hath delighted in Hector's offerings more, I wis;
For ne'er have I seen, neither heard one tell such a marvel as this,
That one man should compass so many terrible deeds in a day
As Hector the Zeus-beloved hath done to the Argive array,
Unholpen, who is not the dear-loved son of Goddess or God;
Yet deeds hath he done that shall lie, I say, for an anguish-load
Long, long on the Argives, and burden the heart of Achaia withal.
But go now, with haste run thou by the ships, and Aias call
Unto me, and Idomeneus: I unto Nestor the godlike will fare,
And will bid him arise, peradventure the ancient king will bear
My hest to the troop of the watchmen, the sacred warder-band:
Unto him will they soonest obey, seeing he that beareth command
Of the guard is the old king's son, and with him goeth Mêriones
Idomeneus' henchman, for chiefly we gave them in charge unto these."
But spake Menelaus the battle-helper doubtfully:
"Nay, but how meanest thou this, the word of thine hest unto me?
Shall I tarry for thine appearing, abiding there with the rest,
Or to thee run back, when meetly accomplished is thy behest?"
Unto him did the King of Men Agamemnon make reply:
"Nay, tarry thou there, lest haply we pass each other by

In returning, for many a path up and down through the host doth lead.
And thou when thou comest bid them to watch with sleepless heed,
Calling on each man, and naming his name, and his race, and his blood,
In courtesy speaking to all, and be not haughty of mood.
But let us too endure all hardness, for Zeus ordained it so,
I ween, from our birth, and hath sent us a heritage of woe."
So sped he his brother away, to bear that heedful behest;
But himself unto Nestor the shepherd of folk hath onward pressed.
And him by his tent and his ship dark-hulled soft-lying he found
On a bed, and beside him his fair-fashioned war-gear lay on the ground,
The shield and the lances twain and the morion flashing bright,
And his baldric glittering-gay, wherewith that warrior wight
Was girded, what time he arrayed him to lead his host to the field
Of manslaying fight, for to grievous eld would he nowise yield.
Then raised he himself on his elbow, and lifted his good grey head,
And he spake unto Atreus' son, and with questioning speech he said:
"Who art thou that thus by the ships and the host comest faring alone
Through the mirk of the black dark night, when waketh beside thee none?
Seeking for one of thy mules or thy comrades comest thou so?
Speak, neither steal thou upon me in silence!—what wilt thou, ho!"
Unto him made answer the King of Men Agamemnon, and spoke:
"O Nestor the Neleïd, glory of all Achaian folk,
Thou shalt know Agamemnon Atreides, whom Zeus above all the rest
Hath whelmed deep down in affliction, so long as within my breast
Abideth the breath of life, and my will by my limbs is wrought.



And I wander thus, for that sleep on mine eyes soft-broodeth not,
But aye for Achaia's wars and her woes am I care-distraught.
For sorely I fear for the Danaan men, neither fixed is mine heart,
As I toss to and fro, but throbbeth as forth of my breast it would start;
And my armour-splendid limbs beneath me with trembling are shaken.
But if aught thou canst do, seeing thou, as I, art of sleep forsaken,
Come with mė, and let us go down to the watchmen, and so shall we see
If haply with toil outworn and with drowsihead they be,
That they slumber and wholly forget their charge of the watch of the night,
While foemen be camping anigh them, and nowise know we aright
Whether or no they be fain to come forth through the darkness to fight."

And Nestor Gerenia's horseman to him made answer then:
"Agamemnon Atreides, glory-preëminent King of Men,
Of a surety for Hector the Counsel-father shall not bring about
All things he deviseth, all dreams that he dreameth perchance, but I doubt
He shall have more trouble and anguish than ever before, if at last
The heart of Achilles shall turn, and his anger be overpast.
But with thee will I verily go, and the rest will we waken from sleep,
Tydeides the spear-renowned, and Odysseus of counsels deep,
And Aias the swift, and Phyleus' scion the battle-fain.
But I would that some one would go moreover, and call these twain,
Even Aias the god-strong wight and Idomeneus king of Crete;
For nowise anigh be their ships, but the uttermost part of the fleet.
But, how worship-worthy soever and dear Menelaus be,
I will chide him, yea, though thou be wroth, I will hide it not from thee,

For that yet he is sleeping, and leaveth the toil unto thee alone:
Now ought he to toil, and to go unto every mightiest one
Supplicating; for now is there come on us need overmastering."
Unto him Agamemnon made answer, and spake the war-folk's king:
"Old sire, otherwhiles shalt thou chide him—I bid thee with all mine heart,
For that oft is he slack of hand, and is loth to play his part,
Not for that he yieldeth to sloth or to folly in any wise;
But ever to me-ward he looketh, and waiteth for me to arise.
But to-night hath he wakened before me, and came and stood by my head.
Even him, to bid hither the heroes for whom thou hast asked, have I sped.
Come, let us go: as for them, we shall find them in front of the gate
With the watchmen, for thus did I bid them thy coming and mine to await."
Unto him did Nestor Gerenia's chariot-champion say:
"Now therefore no Argive with him shall be wroth, nor disobey
When hereafter he rouseth the battle and calleth them on to the fray."
So did he speak, and he cast his tunic his breast around,
And under his glistening feet his beautiful sandals he bound,
And around him he buckled a mantle whose crimson flame-like shone,
Two-folded and wide, and the thick soft fur lay deep thereon.
Then grasped he his massy spear keen-pointed with stubborn brass,
And unto the brazen-harnessed Achaians' ships did he pass.
Then first came they to Odysseus, Zeus's counsel-peer;
And the hero was wakened from sleep by Nestor's voice in his ear;
By Gerenia's horseman the slumber-veil from his soul was rent;
And he came and he spake to the twain, forth-stepping in front of his tent:





" For what cause thus to my galleys alone through the host do ye roam
Through the balmy night? What grievous need on the heroes is come?"
Made answer to him Gerenian Nestor, the lord of the steed:
" O Zeus and Laertes' son, Odysseus shiftful at need,
Be not indignant, for sore is Achaia's trouble to-night.
But come, that we waken another for whom it is meet and right
To be joined with us in our counsel whether to flee or to fight."
So spake he, and back to his tent did Odysseus the shiftful stride,
And he cast on his shoulders his rich-wrought buckler, and after them hied.
So they passed unto Tydeus' son Diomedes, and him they found
Without his tent in his war-gear arrayed, and his comrades around
Lay sleeping; beneath their heads were their bucklers, and each man's lance
Was set upright on the spike, and afar did the brass-gleam glance
Like the lightning of Zeus. And the hero lay on a warrior's bed,
For beneath him was naught but the hide of a lealand ox outspread,
But a bright-dyed rug was folded beneath the chieftain's head.
And Gerenia's horseman Nestor stood by him, and smote him awake,
With a thrust of his foot he moved him, and roused him, and chiding he spake:
" Wake, Tydeus' son, through the livelong night why sleepest thou?
Hast thou not heard how the Trojans be camped on the plain's high brow
Full nigh to the galleys, how scant is the space that divideth us now?"
He spake: from his sleep Tydeides full lightly hath leapt forthright;
And he uttered his voice unto him, and he sped the winged word-flight:
" Tough-moulded art thou, old sire: all resting from toil dost thou scorn.
What, are there no Achaians beside thee younger-born

Who might waken from slumber the kings, as they passed through the host to
But for thee, grey father, no man may deal with thee, I trow!" [and fro?
Unto him made answer Nestor, Gerenia's chariot-lord:
"Yea, fitly and well, my son, hast thou spoken every word.
Sooth, I have goodly sons, I have warfolk withal not a few;
And of these might one go forth our summoning to do:
But heaviest need hath constrained the Achaians hereunto:
For now the decision is set as it were on a razor's edge
For all the Achaians, or bitter destruction or life's sure pledge.
But go now, rouse up Aias the swift and Phyleus' son,—
If thou hast such compassion on me,—for that thou art the younger one."
Then he cast on his shoulders the hide of a lion of flamelike mane,
So huge that it reached to his feet, and his spear in his hand hath he ta'en.
And he hied him away, and he roused and brought those heroes twain.
So when these were met in the place where the troop of the warders lay,
The chiefs of the warders in no wise sleeping there found they,
But every man awake as they sat in their war-array.
And as dogs keep painful watch in a fold about the sheep
As they hearken a mighty beast, which adown from the mountain-steep
Through the forest is coming, and riseth against him a loud outcry
Of men and of dogs, and gone is their sleep from them utterly;
Even so from the eyelids of these was sweet sleep utterly gone,
As they watched through the evil night, for that ever and anon
Plainward they turned them, to hark if the Trojans would haply set on.
And the old king looked upon these, and his spirit was gladness-stirred,



And the winged speech leapt from his lips, and he spake a heartening word :
" Still thus keep watch, dear sons, let slumber on no man seize,
Lest we haply be made a triumph-glee to our enemies."
So spake he, and over the trench he sprang, and behind him sped
The kings of the Argives, the chiefs that were called to the council-stead.
And with them went Nestor's glorious son and Mêriones,
Forasmuch as the rest to the council of princes had summoned these.
And when they had crossed the deep-delved trench, they sat them down
In a space where the earth showed clear mid the corpses thickly-strown
Of the men which were falling when thunderbolt Hector turned him aback
From slaying the Argives, when night's veil fell on the battle-wrack.
There sat they down, and began forthright their counsel to take :
And Gerenia's chariot-champion arose, and Nestor spake :
" Friends, is there none of you hath in his own heart dauntless-bold
Such trust as to go forth hence to the Trojans haughty-souled,
If he haply might catch any laggard that spoiling loitereth,
Or might hear peradventure amidst of their host a rumour's breath
Of all that they counsel together, whether they fiercely yearn
Here to remain by our galleys afar from their town, or return
Cityward, since they have thus overborne the Achaian men ?
Even all these things might he learn, and might win unto us again
Scatheless : great should his glory be then wide under the heaven
Among all earth-folk, and a goodly gift unto him should be given.
For of all the chieftains that rule mid the galleys, both most and least,
Shall every man of them give unto him a ewe black-fleeced,

With her yeanling lamb, for of all possessions is this the best ;
And at banquets and fellowship-feasts shall he still be the chiefest guest."
So spake he, and awed into silence was every man that heard,
Till lord Diomedes the battle-helper spake the word :
" Nestor, me doth mine heart prick on, and my courage is high
To enter the host of the Trojans, the foes that abide so nigh.
But if peradventure another with me on the quest would fare,
More should our comfort be then, and stouter of heart we were.
And if two be together, one haply discerneth before his friend
That which is best ; and alone though the keen glance comprehend,
Yet the wit-shaft is shorter of flight, the purpose shall lightlier bend."
He spake, and full many to go with the lord Diomedes were fain :
The Aiantes were fain thereof, the War-god's henchmen twain,
And Mêriones, and full eager the son of Nestor was found,
And fain was Atreus' son, Menelaus the spear-renowned ;
And eager to enter the host of the foes was the steadfast-souled,
Even Odysseus, for ever his spirit was dauntless-bold.
But arose Agamemnon the King of Men, and thus spake he :
" Diomedes, Tydeus' son, most dear to the heart of me,
Choose thou for thy fellow even as seemeth good in thine eyes,
Even the best for thine helping—thou seest how many arise ;—
Neither have thou respect unto persons, to leave who is best for the deed
And by reason of shamefastness to take who shall fail thee at need,
Looking unto his lineage,—not though he be of the kinglier seed."
So spake he, fearing for bright-haired Menelaus' sake.



And to them Diomedes the battle-helper answered and spake:
"If indeed I shall choose my companion, according to this your word,
How shall I then forget Odysseus the godlike lord?
Full eager his heart is ever, and high doth his courage swell
In all manner of toils, and Pallas Athênê loveth him well.
If he shall go with me, even from the midst of flame fierce-burning
Will we both win back, for that matchless he is in keen-discerning."
Answered and spake Odysseus the godlike, the man toil-tried:
"Tydeides, praise not me overmeasure, nor yet do thou chide;
For thou speakest to them that know, to the Argive chieftain-band.
Come, let us go: far spent is the night, and the dawn is at hand,
And the stars have sloped to the west; of the tide of the night there be gone
Two watches by this, and now remaineth the third alone."
So did they speak, and their terrible battle-gear did they don.
Thrasymêdes the battle-bider gave unto Tydeus' son
A two-edged sword, for his own had he left by his black ship's side,
And a shield; and he set on his head a morion of tough bull-hide;
Coneless and crestless it was, which menfolk wont to call
The skull-cap—it wardeth the heads of young men stalwart and tall.
And Mêriones to Odysseus a bow and a quiver brought,
And a sword; and the hero set on his head a helmet wrought
Of hide, and with many a thong within was it firmly braced,
And without it the ivory-gleaming tusks of a boar were placed.
Closely on this side and that were they set in a grinning row,
Well and craftsmanly wrought, and within was a cushion of felt for the brow

It was stolen from Eleon the town of Amyntor Ormenus' child;
For Autolykus brake through the wall of his palace stately-piled.
To Kythêran Amphidamas gave he the prize to Skandeia to bear:
And to Molus Amphidamas gave it, a guest-gift rich and rare,
And to Mêriones did he give it, a battle-fence for his son.
Now darkly it claspeth the head of Odysseus, set thereon.

So when in their terrible harness of battle arrayed they were,
Forth went they, and left behind them all the chieftains there.
And to rightward did Pallas Athênê send, to their path full nigh,
A heron beside them flying: they saw it not with the eye
Through the mirk of the black dark night, howbeit they heard its cry.
And Odysseus was glad for the omen, and thus to Athênê he prayed:

"Hear, child of the Aegis-father, who comest still to mine aid
In all my manifold toils, and whithersoever I wend
I 'scape not thine eye: Athênê, be now if ever my friend,
And vouchsafe us to win to the galleys with goodly renown once more,
Having compassed a mighty deed that shall vex the Trojans sore."

Then prayed Diomedes the battle-stay to the power unseen:
"Hearken to me too, Daughter of Zeus, unwearied Queen!
Go with me, as once thou wentest with Tydeus my father, then
When he fared unto Thebes, when the message he bare of Achaia's men.
The battle-harnessed Achaians he left by Asôpus' side,
But himself with a word of peace to the folk Kadmeian hied.
But terrible deeds he wrought as backward he wended again,
By thine help, Goddess divine, for thou stoodst by his side full fain.



Even so of thy gracious will stand by me and guard me now ;
And so will I offer to thee a broad-browed yearling cow,
Unbroken, which no man ever beneath the yoke hath led ;
Even this will I offer to thee, and the horns shall be gold-overspread."
So spake they praying, and Pallas Athênê heard their cry.
So when they had put up their prayer to the daughter of Zeus most high,
They fared on their way through the mirk of the night like lions twain,
Over slaughter, o'er corpses, midst armour and dark-clotted blood of the slain.
But Hector in no wise suffered the Trojans in sleep to rest,
But he gathered together in one place all their mightiest,
Even all the battle-chieftains and lords of the Trojan folk :
And unto their gathered array of his deep dark counsel he spoke :
" Who is there will promise and bring to pass this deed for me
For a goodly gift ?—yea surely unstinted his guerdon shall be :
I will give him a chariot and war-steeds twain with high-arched crest ;
Of all mid Achaia's sea-swift ships shall they be the best ;
Whosoever shall dare this deed, and the high renown shall earn,
Even this—to adventure anigh to the ships fleet-faring, and learn
Whether the sea-swift galleys be guarded even as before,
Or whether the foe by the might of our hands overborne in the war
One with another take counsel of flight, and be nowise fain
Of the night-watch, with toil outworn and the terrible battle-strain."
So spake he, and hushed for a space were they all, and answered him none.
Now amidst of the Trojans was found one Dolon, Eumêdes' son,
Son of the herald divine, right wealthy in gold and in brass ;

Ill-favoured he was to behold, howbeit fleet-footed he was:
And the man was an only son with sisters five beside.
So there in the midst of the Trojans to Hector the captain he cried:
" Hector, mine heart hath upstirred me, my spirit within me doth burn
To go to the ships fleet-faring the tale of the night to learn.
But come now, uplift me thy sceptre, and swear unto me this night
That thou surely wilt give me the steeds and the chariot with brass rich-dight
Which be wont to bear the princely Peleus' son to the fight.
No bootless scout will I be unto thee, nor thine hope will I cheat:
I will press right on through the midst of their host, till I come to the fleet,
To the galley of King Agamemnon, for there their chiefest shall be,
I ween, to take counsel together, whether to fight or to flee."
Then Hector took sceptre in hand, and he sware that solemn vow:
" Let Zeus, loud-thundering lord of Hêrê, be witness now,
That none other Trojan beside thee behind those steeds shall ride,
But thine evermore shall they be, I say it, thy joy and thy pride."
But he sware him a bootless oath, yet he kindled his spirit so.
Forthright on his shoulders hath Dolon slung his bended bow;
And without his raiment he folded around him a grey wolf's skin;
On his head was a ferret-fur cap, in his hand was a javelin keen.
Then he turned him to go from the host to the ships; but it was not his doom
Again from the ships to return, and with tidings to Hector to come.
Now so soon as he left behind him the throng of the horses and men,
Fast sped he along the path: but ware of his coming then
Was Odysseus: to lord Diomedes straight did the Zeus-born say:



" Diomedes, yonder there cometh one of the foes' array.
I know not whether to spy on the ships he hath hitherward hied,
Or to spoil of its armour the body of one of the dead which have died.
Now suffer we first that he pass us a little way on the plain:
If thereafter we rush on his track shall we swiftly o'ertake him again.
But and if peradventure the wight shall outrun us by speed of his feet,
Leaping on with the spear shalt thou head him still from the host to the fleet,
Lest haply citywards fleeing our expectation he cheat."

Then turned they aside from the path, and mid corpses adown did they lie;
And he in his heedlessness swift-running onward hath passed them by.
But when he was gotten as far as the length of the furrow-space
Of mules outstripping oxen—for swifter they be of their pace
In dragging the jointed plough through the deep-soiled fallow-land,—
Then ran they upon him, and hearing the foot-beat awhile did he stand:
For he deemèd they were comrades sent from the host of Troy on his track
At Hector's counter-command from the quest to turn him aback.
But when they were drawn so nigh—yea, nigher than javelin-cast,
He knew them for foemen, and bent his swift knees hurrying fast
To escape them, and they in the chase their strong feet fiercely strained.
And as when two sharp-fanged hounds in the hunting craft well-trained
Follow hard on a doe or a hare with tireless speed evermore
Through the tangled ways of the woodland, and screaming it fleeth before,
So Tydeus' son and Odysseus the war-burg-waster ever
Unswerving pursued, and the fleer still from his folk did they sever.
But when in a little more on the watchmen Dolon would light,

As he fled to the ships, into Tydeus' son was sudden might
Breathed of Athênê, that none of Achaia's brass-mailed host
Might boast to have smitten him first, and the hero's glory be lost.
Leaping on with the lance then cried Diomedes the strong to the fleer:
"Stand ho! or my javelin shall reach thee: I tell thee, if leapeth the spear
From mine hand, not long shalt thou 'scape from destruction sudden-sheer!":
He spake, and he hurled with the lance, but of purpose he missed the wight:
And the point of the fair-polished spear flew over his shoulder to right,
And into the earth it plunged; and he halted sore afraid,
Trembling,—the while of his teeth a chattering sound was made,—
White with his fear; and the twain hard-panting sprang to his side,
And they gripped his hands; and the wretch brake forth into weeping, and cried
"O take me alive: I will ransom myself, for at home have I store
Of brass and of gold, and of iron the toil-born child of the ore;
And my father would lavish of these, he would nowise count the cost
If he heard that alive I lay mid the ships of the Danaan host."
And Odysseus the manifold-counselled answereth him, and he saith:
"Be thou of good cheer, let thy spirit be nowise o'ershadowed of death.
But come now, answer me this, and the truth unswerving declare:
Unto what end thus from the host of Troy to the ships dost thou fare
Through the black dark night, when sleep all other mortals beside?
Is it so, that thou comest to spoil some one of the dead which have died?
Or did Hector send thee forth for to spy upon whatso is done
By the hollow ships? or was it thine own soul pricked thee on?"
Sore trembled the limbs of Dolon beneath him, and thus did he say:



" With many a mad hope Hector led my mind astray,
Who pledged him to give me the thunderfoot horses that bear to the fight
Peleus' son, and his chariot with brass-work richly dight.
Through the mirk of the black night swiftly-fleeting he bade me to go
Even till I came to the host of Achaia, and there to know
Whether the sea-swift galleys be guarded like as before,
Or whether the foe by the might of our hands overborne in the war
One with another take counsel of flight, and be nowise fain
Of the night-watch, with toil outworn and the terrible battle-strain."
Smiled on him Odysseus the manifold-counselled, and made reply:
" Of a surety thine heart was set on a gift both great and high,
The horses of Aiakus' scion the war-wise; hard they are
For a mortal to tame their fury, or drive in the battle-car,
Save for Achilles alone, whom a deathless mother bare.
But come now, answer me this, and the truth unswerving declare:
Where leftest thou Hector the shepherd of folk when thou hither didst fare?
And where is his harness of battle lying?—his horses where?
And what of the rest of the Trojans?—or watch they or slumber they?
And what is the counsel they take?—are they furious-fain to stay
Here by our galleys afar from their town, or to turn again
Cityward, since they have overborne the Achaian men?"
Answered him Dolon the son of Eumêdes, and thus spake he:
" Therefore herein will I tell the truth unswerving to thee.
Hector this night and the princes, the wise in counselling,
By the barrow of Ilus the godlike be met in the council-ring,

From the tumult afar, but for this that thou askest as touching the guard,
There is none set apart from the host to keep it with watch and ward.
For at all the bivouac-fires that the Trojans perforce must light
There waking they sit, and they cheer one another to watch through the night.
Howbeit the while the men of their war-aid battle-renowned
Have left to the Trojans to watch, but themselves lie slumber-drowned,
For that nowise anigh unto these be their wives and their children found."
Then Odysseus the manifold-counselled answered the captive foe:
"How then?—intermingled with horse-quelling Trojans slumber they so,
Or aloof do they lie?—render answer to me, to the end I may know."
Answered him Dolon the son of Eumêdes, and thus spake he:
"Therefore herein will I tell the truth unswerving to thee.
By the sea be the Karian folk, and Paionia's bowmen, then
The Lelegan host and the Kaukons and godlike Pelasgian men,
And by Thymbrê the Lycians and Mysians stately-charioted,
And the Phrygian steeds, and the car-borne host from Maionia led.
—But of these things one by one what boots it thus to enquire?
For if of a truth to enter the Trojan throng ye desire,
Lo yonder the new-come Thracians aloof, even outermost,
With the scion of Eïoneus, King Rhesus, amidst of their host.
He hath horses the fairest and greatest that ever my hap was to see,
Whiter than snow, and in speed as the blasts of the wind they be.
And cunningly-dight is his battle-chariot with silver and gold;
And with war-gear golden, gigantic, a wondrous thing to behold,
He hath come: for the wearing of deathling men it seemeth not





Fashioned, but rather it seemeth for Gods everlasting wrought.
But now do ye bring me hence to your sea-swift ships on the strand,
Or bind me and leave me here fast-fettered in pitiless band,
That so, when again ye return unto me, my words may be tried,
Whether this that I spake was truth, or whether my lips have lied."
Spake Diomedes the strong with terribly-glaring eyes:
"Dolon, think not in thine heart to escape us in any wise,
For all thy tidings of good, forasmuch as our captive thou art;
For if we shall hold thee to ransom now, or shall let thee depart,
To Achaia's sea-swift ships wouldst thou surely return again,
Either to play the spy, or to strive in the battle-strain.
But and if thou shalt lose thy life by mine hands' death-dealing stroke,
Never thereafter wilt thou be a grief to the Argive folk."
He spake, and that other to make supplication outstretched his hand
To his beard,—but he leapt on him, smote mid-neck with his battle-brand;
Clear through the sinews twain hath it flashed with its lightning sweep,
And rolled was his head in the dust as the prayer yet moaned on his lip.
Then did they take the helmet of ferret-fur wrought from his head,
And the wolf-skin and back-springing bow, and the long lance-shaft of the dead.
Then did Odysseus the godlike upraise to the Giver of Prey,
Even Athênê, the spoils, and thus in his prayer did he say:
"Goddess, I hail thee with these, for on thee most chiefly of all
The Deathless Ones in the height of Olympus that dwell will we call.
Now grant furthermore that on Thracia's horses and men we may fall."
So did he speak, and therewith he uplifted and set them on high

On a tamarisk-bush, and a plain-seen token he set thereby ;
For he gathered a handful of reeds and of thick-grown tamarisk-sprays,
Lest they haply in darkness should miss it, returning by night-shadowed ways.
Then onward mid arms of the dead and mid blood dark-clotted they passed,
Until to the host of the Thracian men they came at the last.
There toil-over worn were they sleeping, and fair did the brazen gleam
Of the armour in three rows orderly ranked from the dark earth stream.
And beside each chieftain were tethered the steeds of his chariot-team.
And Rhesus amidst of his men lay sleeping, and hard by him
Were his fleet steeds bound with thongs to the end of the chariot-rim.
And Odysseus espied him, and showed, as his fellow forthright he addressed :
" Lo, this is the man, Diomedes, and these be the steeds of our quest,
Which Dolon foretold unto us, the captive we slew but now.
Come then, and thy battle-might put thou forth : thou oughtest not, thou,
Idly to stand with thy weapons : the steeds from the car do thou lead,
Or fall thou to slaying the men, and I to the steeds will give heed."
Then breathed Athênê the grey-eyed might into Tydeus' son ;
And on this side and that side he slew, and ever the ghastly groan
Arose from the falchion-hewn, and with blood was the earth stained red.
And even as a lion that cometh on flocks unshepherded,
On goats or on sheep, rusheth on them with fearful and fell intent,
Even so against Thracia's men the son of Tydeus went,
Until he had slain of them twelve : and Odysseus the counsel-stored,—
Unto whomso Tydeides drew nigh and smote with the edge of the sword,
Odysseus came after, and dragged aside by the foot the slain,





Purposing thus in his soul, that the steeds of the beautiful mane
Lightly between them might pass, neither start in affrighted mood
As they trod on the corpses, for strange were they yet unto murder and blood.
But when came Tydeides at last to the king, he reft away
Sweet life from the thirteenth foe, as heavily breathing he lay,
For that over his head did an awful nightmare-vision rise
That night, even Oineus' seed, by Pallas Athênê's device.
But the thunderfoot horses the while Odysseus the steadfast-brave
Loosed, and with thongs he bound them together, and forth he drave
From the press with strokes of his bow, forasmuch as he had not thought
To take the glittering whip from the chariot cunningly wrought.
Then he whistled to Diomedes the godlike the signal-call.
But he tarried, and mused what deed he should do most daring of all;
Whether to take the car where the rich-wrought armour lay,
And to drag it thence by the pole, or uplift it and bear it away,
Or whether to slay yet more of the children of Thracia-land.
And as thus in his spirit he mused, by his side did Athênê stand,
And she stayed Diomedes the godlike, and spake to the overbold:
"Take thought for returning, thou son of Tydeus the mighty-souled,
Unto the hollow ships, lest thou even come thither in flight.
Have a care lest another God awaken the Trojans this night."
So did she speak, forthright to the Goddess he gave good heed.
He hath mounted in haste, with his bow hath Odysseus lashed them to speed;
Then flew to Achaia's sea-swift ships each gallant steed.
Yet no blind watch was kept of Apollo Silverbow,

When he marked how Athênê cared for the son of Tydeus so.
Wrathful against her he entered the host of the Trojan folk,
And Hippokoön, counsellor-chief of the Thracians, from slumber he woke,
The high-born kinsman of Rhesus. From sleep he upstarted, and lo,
Void was the place where the fleet steeds stood but a little ago;
And men lay gasping on earth with slaughter ghastly-dyed:
And he shrieked, and aloud on the name of his dear-loved friend he cried.
And a cry from the Trojans and tumult unspeakable rose thereupon,
As they rushed to the place, and stared at the deeds of horror done,
While the heroes that wrought them afar to their hollow galleys were gone.

But so soon as they came unto where they had smitten Hector's spy,
Odysseus the Zeus-loved stayed the fleetfoot steeds thereby;
And Tydeides leapt to the ground, and the blood-stained spoils of the slain
He gave to Odysseus' hands, and he hasted and mounted again.
And he lashed those coursers fleet, and with eager speed they flew
To the hollow ships—yea, fain was their spirit so to do.

And Nestor cried, for that first he heard that far hoof-stroke:
"O friends, ye lords of the Argives, and chiefs of battle-folk,
False shall my word be or true?—yet my spirit is bidding me speak:—
Lo, on mine ears doth the thud of the trampling of swift steeds break.
O might it but be, that Odysseus and prince Diomedes the strong
Thus swiftly come driving the thunderfoot steeds from the Trojan throng!
But sorely mine heart is adread lest mischief hath come in their quest
From the battle-onset of Troy to the Argive bravest and best."

Not yet was the word full-spoken, when lo, they were come, even they.



And down to the earth they sprang, and the men of Achaia's array
With hand-clasp joyfully greeted the heroes, and loving word;
And Nestor questioned them first, Gerenia's chariot-lord:
"Come tell me, O glorious Odysseus, Achaia's mighty boast,
In what wise did ye win these steeds?—did ye enter the Trojan host?
Or was it a God that gave them, who met you this night by the way?
Wondrous like to the rays of the sun's white splendour are they!
Evermore do I plunge mid the fight with the Trojans: ye never shall say
That ye found by the galleys abiding Gerenia's warrior grey:
But never such horses as these have I seen, nor have known ere now.
Nay, but a God hath met you, and given you these, I trow:
For dear are ye both unto Zeus the Cloudrack-driver, I ween,
And the child of the Aegis-lord, Athênê the grey-eyed Queen."
Made answer Odysseus to him, and the manifold-counselled spoke
"O Nestor Neleus' son, thou praise of Achaia's folk,
Goodlier horses than these might a God's gift lightly be,
If such were his will, for the Gods be mighter far than we.
But as touching the steeds whereof thou enquirest, ancient, they came
But of late from the land of Thrace, and slain is the lord of the same
By brave Diomedes, and twelve beside him, his mightiest, lie.
And the thirteenth man anigh to the galleys we slew, a spy
Whom Hector the chief and the rest of the lordly Trojans sent
To know of the state of the host, and to search out our intent."
Then the thunderfoot horses he drave with laughter of triumph-glee
Over the trench, and the heroes followed exultingly.

So when they were come to Tydeides' pavilion stately and fair,
Those horses with thongs of hide well-fashioned tethered they there
Unto the manger whereat Diomedes war-steeds fleet
Were standing arow, and were eating the honey-savoured wheat.
But the blood-bespattered spoils of Dolon Odysseus laid
In the stern of his ship, till his vow to Athênê the Queen should be paid.
Then the heroes plunged in the sea, and the sweat of their labour they washed
From ankle, from neck, and from thigh with the slaughter-stains dark-splashed.
And so soon as the sea-wave had cleansed the abundant sweat from their skin,
The while by its clear cool dash their hearts were refreshed within,
Into the burnished lavers they stepped, till the pain of their toil
Melted away, and thereafter anointed their bodies with oil.
Then sat they down to the supper, and drew from the brimming bowl
And poured to Athênê the wine that as honey is sweet to the soul.



BOOK XI.

How the mightiest chiefs of Achaia were stricken amidst of the battle.

FROM her couch by lordly Tithonus' side did the Dawn upspring,
Her light to the Deathless Ones and the children of men to bring.
Then Zeus sped Discord forth to Achaia's ships fleet-faring,
And the signal-token of war in her hands was the grim fiend bearing.
On the huge dark bulk of Odysseus' galley she took her stand—
For that midmost it lay—to send forth her voice upon either hand,
Hitherward, to the tent of Aias Telamon's son, and yonder
To Achilles' tent, for their galleys had these beached farthest asunder,
For on naught save their manhood and strength of their hands would the heroes rely.
There stood the Goddess, and cried with a great and a terrible cry
Wild-ringing, and filled the heart of every Achaian with might;
And she made them fain of the onset, afire for the stintless fight:
And suddenly fairer and sweeter the battle-play seemed unto these
Than to flee in the hollow ships to their fatherland far overseas.
Then shouted Atreides commanding the host of the Argives to don

Their harness of fight, and he sheathed him in brass that flame-like shone.
First unto his legs did he lay the greaves fair-glittering
Clasping the ankle around with the burnished silver ring.
Thereafter the fence of his corslet he cast about his breast,
Which Kinyrês gave him, a princely gift to a princely guest.
For to Cyprus the mighty rumour had come, how Achaia's host
Were making them ready to sail in their ships to the Troyland coast:
Wherefore he gave it, a gift that should make the king's heart glad.
Twice six bands of the cyanus darkly-gleaming it had,
And of flaming gold twice six, and of glittering tin a score:
And dark-blue snakes to the gorget thereof writhed up evermore,
Three upon either side; as the rainbow that Kronos' son
Hath set in the clouds for a sign unto mortals, so they shone.
And he slung from his shoulders his sword with golden studs bestarred
Flashing around, and the same did a scabbard of silver guard.
And it clashed by his side as it hung by many a golden chain.
And his rich-wrought warrior-warding onset-shield hath he ta'en,
Lovely, with twice five circles of brass encompassed about;
White bosses of tin twice ten from the face thereof flashed out:
And of cyanus darkly-gleaming was one in the midmost space.
And thereon was embossed the Gorgon-demon, with stony gaze
Grim-glaring, and Terror and Rout encompassed the Fearful Face.
And the baldric was all of silver; a serpent of cyanus-blue
Coil upon coil writhed down that glittering band, and there grew
Three heads from the neck of the monster in mazy knots interlaced.



And his twin-ridged helmet of fourfold crest on his head hath he placed:
Overglooming the brow of the hero terribly nodded its mane.
And he seized in his grip strong brass-tipped keen-whetted lances twain.
Afar from his harness the sheen of the brass flamed up to the sky.
And Athênê and Hêrê the Queen in thunder spake from on high
To honour the king of Mycenae the city of gold thereby.
Then to his charioteer each chieftain gave command
To range in order the steeds by the trench, and to have them in hand.
But themselves on foot in their battle-gear clad to the forefront are gone
Swift-rushing, and quenchless arose the war-cry before the dawn.
And long ere the drivers they stood at the trench ready-ranked for the war,
And the chariots a little space after them followed, and fearful uproar
Kronion upstirred, and a ghastly dew from on high he shed
Dank-drizzling with blood through the air, for a sign of his purpose dread
To hurl far down unto Hades many a gallant head.

On the swell of the broad plain over against them the Trojan array
Round Hector the mighty and princely Polydamas met for the fray,
And Aeneas, whom Troy's folk honoured like to a God alway,
And Agênor the godlike, and Polybus—these were Antenor's sons
With Akamas stalwart and young and fair as the Deathless Ones.
And Hector was bearing his shapely shield in the front of their war.
And even as out of the clouds forth-gleameth a baleful star,
And a moment thereafter mid clouds overshadowing sinketh from sight,
So Hector now flashed forth in the forefront of Troytown's might,
And now was he ranging the rearward: from all his body poured

Flame-splendour of brass, as the lightning of Zeus the Aegis-lord.
And as overagainst each other the reapers band by band
Go driving the swath of barley or wheat through the furrowed land
Of a wealthy man, and the sheaves fall thick to the sickle's sweep,
Even so did Achaians and Trojans each on the other leap
Destroying; they dreamed not of ruinous flight, nor these nor those.
And the battle was equal-poised, and as wolves men rushed at their foes.
And Discord groaning-fraught was exulting that havoc to see,
For none of the Deathless was there with the fighters, but only she.
Nay, amidst them was none of the rest of the Gods, but at peace they were,
Sitting their halls within, where the palace builded fair
Of each on the ridge-scarred folds of Olympus rose: and they railed
Bitterly each and all on Kronion the Cloudrack-veiled
That he willed to vouchsafe to the Trojans glory, yet nowise quailed
Allfather, nor recked of their indignation, but throned apart
Alone in his glorious majesty sat with triumphant heart,
Looking down on the Trojans' town, on Achaia's ships by the main,
On the bickering glitter of brass, on the slayers and them that were slain.
So all through the morning-tide, and still while the day waxed hot,
Fast fell the folk, as the shafts from host unto host were shot.
But it came to pass, at the hour when a woodman breaketh his fast,
Mid a mountain's forest-glens, when his hands grow weary at last
With hewing the stately trees, and his spirit is toil-fordone,
And his soul hath hunger, and sweet is food to the fainting one;
Then by their valour the Danaan men the battalions burst,



On-cheering their fellows from rank unto rank. Agamemnon first
Plunged mid the rout, and Biênor, a shepherd of folk, with his spear
He slew, and thereafter Orïleus his henchman-charioteer ;
For he leapt to the earth from his chariot, and stood in the war-king's path ;
But the lance keen-whetted, as onward he rushed in his onset-wrath,
Crashed through his brow, nor availed him the massy helmet-rim ;
But through brass and through bone went the spear, and the very brain of him
Was blood-besprent ; so he slew him though never so battle-fain.
And there did the King of Men Agamemnon leave those slain
With breasts bare-gleaming, so soon as he plucked their corslets away.
Upon Isus and Antiphus then did he rush with intent to slay,
Two sons of Priam, bastard and wedlock-born, and the twain
In the selfsame chariot rode : 'twas the bastard swayed the rein ;
By his side stood war-famed Antiphus : these in the days overpast
Had Achilles on Ida's spurs with osier withes bound fast,
When he came on them feeding their flock ; but for ransom he let them go.
Agamemnon Atreus' son wide-ruling this day is their foe :
On the breast of the one by the pap came his lance as it leapt from afar,
And his sword smote Antiphus hard by the ear, and dashed from his car.
Then hasted the King, and their battle-gear fair from their bodies he tore,
Knowing them well, forasmuch as his eyes had beheld them before
By the ships, when from Ida fleet-footed Achilles the captives bore.
And even as the fawns of a hind full lightly be crushed beneath
The jaws of a lion, the helpless prey of his ravening teeth,
When he findeth their covert, and rendeth their tender life away,

And their mother may nothing avail for their help in the evil day,
Albeit so near, for on her is there come a horrible dread,
And swiftly through tangled coppice and woodland lawn hath she fled
From the rush of the mighty beast, sweat-reeking and terror-sped ;
Even so from destruction no man of the Trojans might save them then,
Nay, but themselves fled panic-aghast from the Argive men.
Peisander and battle-bider Hippolochus slain by him fall,
Sons of the subtle Antimachus, him who was foremost of all
To take Alexander's gold, the splendid gift, and to plead
That Helen should not be restored unto Atreus' bright-haired seed.
None other than his two sons did the lord Agamemnon meet
In one car riding, and battleward speeding their steeds' swift feet.
Then dropped from the hands of the charioteer the glittering rein,
And the horses in terror were plunging. On rushed like a lion amain
Atreides. But they from the chariot besought him with trembling cries :
" O take us alive, Atreides, accept the ransom-price !
In the halls of Antimachus lieth a goodly treasure-store
Of brass and of gold and of iron the toil-born child of the ore :
And our father would lavish of these, he would nowise count the cost
If he heard that alive we lay mid the ships of the Danaan host."
So weeping, the heart of the king unto pity they fain would have stirred
With words soft-pleading, but ruthless-hard was the voice that they heard :
" If indeed of the subtle Antimachus ye be the curséd brood,
Who bade, when once Menelaus in Trojan folkmote stood,—
When he came on an ambassage, he and Odysseus the godlike-strong,—



To slay him there neither let him return to Achaia's throng,
Now shall ye surely atone for your father's shameful wrong."
He spake, and adown from the chariot to earth Peisander he thrust,
Dashing his spear on his breast, and he rolled on his back in the dust.
Then flightward Hippolochus darted, but him on the ground he slew,
Lopping his hands with his falchion, and shearing his neck in two;
And the head like a millstone rolling mid feet of the fighters he threw.
Then he left them, and there where the ranks thickest-thronging in battle-shock
With his mail-clad Achaians into the heart of the fight hath he dashed. [clashed
And footman was slaying footman that could not choose but fly,
And horseman, horseman—from under their feet rose the dust on high
From the plain, by the thundering hoofs of the horses uptossed to the sky—
As they smote with the brass, while Lord Agamemnon slaughtering still
Pursued, and through battle-uproar to his men did his war-cry thrill.
As when ravening fire breaketh out in a forest dark and deep,
And the rolling flames upon every side do the wind-whirls sweep,
And the brakes fall shrivelled to ashes before the fire-blast's leap;
So fell in their flight before King Agamemnon Atreus' seed
The heads of the Trojans, and many a gallant-crested steed
With the clattering cars dashed madly through highways of that wild fray,
Bereft of their princely charioteers on the earth who lay,
Foul corpses, far sweeter to vulture's beak than to lips of a bride.
But Zeus from the darts and the dust of the fight drew Hector aside,
Aloof from the murder-ravin, the blood, and the battle-uproar;
While Atreides cheering the Danaans onward pursued evermore.

On, by the barrow of Ilus the ancient, Dardanus' son,
On through the midst of the plain, by the fig-tree sped they on,
Cityward straining, and ever Atreides pursued them with shouts,
And slaughter-defiled his resistless hands with the dark blood-gouts.
But when to the Skaian gate they were come and the oak thereby,
There did they rally, and tarried their fellows' drawing nigh.
But some through the midst of the plain fled still, as in terror rush
Kine scared by a lion that stole on the herd in the night's dead hush ;—
But for one doth a dawn of destruction swift and sheer awake,
For the lion with strong teeth suddenly gripped her neck and brake,
And her blood and her inwards thereafter his murder-thirst shall slake ;—
So Lord Agamemnon the scion of Atreus followed them fast,
Ever slaying the hindermost, and they fled all terror-aghast.
And many on face or on back from their chariots earthward were dashed
By Atreides' hands, as his spear through the storm of his wrath fierce-flashed.
But when in a little more they had come to the steep-built town,
Even to the wall thereof, from the height of the heaven came down
The Father of Gods and of men, and he sat upon Ida's crown,
The fountain-flashing hill : in his hands the thunderbolt lay.
Then Iris the golden-feathered he sped with his message away :
" Go speed thee, Iris the swift, unto Hector, and thus shalt thou say :
So long as he seeth the lord Agamemnon, the king of folk,
Storming afront, making havoc of ranks with the swift death-stroke,
So long let him cross not his path, let him otherwhere cheer his array
On to the grapple with foemen, the tug of the desperate fray.



But when by a spear-stab wounded, or smitten by arrow's flight,
He shall leap on his chariot, then will I give the victory-might
Unto Hector, to slay and to slay, by the fair-benched ships till he stand,
And the sun go down, and the darkness-veil overshadow the land."
So spake he to Iris the swift, and the Wind-foot did as he said ;
And adown from the heights of Ida to Ilium the holy she sped.
And Hector the godlike, the child of Priam, found she there
On his chariot of horses standing, his war-car fashioned fair.
And Iris the swift-foot bearing the message of Zeus drew near:
" Hector the son of Priam, Zeus's counsel-peer,
Zeus Allfather hath sent me to speak this word in thine ear:
So long as thou seest the lord Agamemnon, the king of folk,
Storming afront, making havoc of ranks with the swift death-stroke,
So long shalt thou cross not his path, thou shalt otherwhere cheer thine array
On to the grapple with foemen, the tug of the desperate fray.
But when by a spear-stab wounded, or smitten by arrow's flight,
He shall leap on his chariot, then Zeus giveth thee victory-might,
To slay and to slay, until by the fair-benched ships thou stand,
And the sun go down, and the darkness-veil overshadow the land."
So spake she, and Iris flashed from the earth with wingèd speed.
Down from his chariot to earth sprang Hector in battle-weed,
And brandishing keen-whetted lances he ranged the host about,
Cheering them on, and he wakened the terrible onset-shout.
So they rallied, and front to front they abode the Achaian men,
And the Argive ranks closed up, and they burst on the foemen again.

So the battle was joined: there was no man flinched: still rushed to the front
Agamemnon, fain to be foremost to face the battle's brunt.

Now tell me, ye Muses that dwell in the halls of Olympus' height,
Who first of the war-host braved Agamemnon's battle-might,
Of the home-born Trojan men or their war-aid far-renowned.
Stalwart Iphidamas son of Antenor the first was found,
Who was nurtured in Thrêkê the sheep-fed, the land of the deep dark loam,—
I twas Kissês that reared him, a little child, in his palace-home,
His mother's sire, who begat Theano the fair of face.
But so soon as his fosterling grew unto youth-tide's glory and grace,
Fain would the ancient have kept him, and gave him his daughter to wife:
But even from the bride-bower he went at the rumour of Troy's great strife
With twice six beakèd galleys that followed him over the tide.
But he left those shapely ships in Perkotê's haven to ride,
But himself over mountain and plain unto Ilium held on his way:—
Even he crossed Atreus' son Agamemnon's path that day.
Onward they charged on each other till now they were drawn full near:
Then hurled Agamemnon, and missed, and sideward glanced his spear.
But Iphidamas under his corslet stabbed at his baldric-band,
And onward he drave it with all the strength of his heavy hand:
Yet it pierced not the glittering girdle, but ere it might work his intent,
Griding against the silver like lead was the spear-point bent.
Then grasped he the shaft, Agamemnon the lord of many a land,
Like a lion in fury he tugged, and he plucked it out of his hand.
Then he lashed at his neck with his falchion, and palsied his strength straight-



Down fell he, and slept the sleep of the sword even there where he lay.
Ah piteous!—afar from his new-wedded wife for the Trojans he died.
With great gifts had he won her, yet knew not the grace of the love of his bride:
For a hundred kine had he given, and promised a thousand more,
Yea, goats and sheep from the flocks no man might number o'er.
Then Atreus' son Agamemnon spoiled of his harness the slain,
And the beautiful war-gear back to Achaia's throng hath he ta'en.
Now when this was beheld of Koön the war-famed hero-chief,
First of the sons of Antenor, a cloud of mighty grief
Overshadowed his eyes for the brother that stricken to death lay there.
Sidewards he stepped with his lance, and ere Agamemnon was ware
He stabbed him amidst of the forearm below the elbow-joint,
And clean through the flesh of him passed the glittering lance's point.
Then Agamemnon the King of Men sudden-shuddered with pain;
Yet not even so from the strife and the war did the hero refrain,
But he rushed upon Koön, grasping his stormwind-toughened spear.
By the foot was he haling in haste that brother in death still dear—
For one father begat them,—and cried to the champions the rescue-shout:
Crashed through his boss-studded shield, as he dragged him through battle-rout,
The brass-headed lance, and his limbs in the palsy of death were unstrung:
And the hero bestrode him, and down on his brother his head he flung.
So there of the sons of Antenor fulfilled was their doom, to fall
By the hands of Atreides the King, and they passed unto Hades' hall.
On went the hero through ranks of the foemen, and ever he warred [shard,
With the lightning of spears, with the flame of the sword, with the huge rock-

For so long as the blood from the spear-gash yet was trickling warm:
But at last, when the wound waxed dry, and the gore clotted thick on his arm,
Then sharp were the pangs that thrilled through the might of Atreus' son.
As the sharp dart smiteth a woman whose travailing hour is begun,
Keen-shot by the Eileithuiae, the Queens of Travail-pain,
The daughters of Hêrê that bring the bitter anguish-strain,
So sharp were the pangs that thrilled through the might of Atreus' seed.
And he sprang to his chariot, and spake to his charioteer to speed
His steeds to the hollow ships, for his heart was anguish-rent:
And across the Danaan ranks his voice far-ringing he sent:
"Friends, chiefs of the Argive warriors, lords of battle-folk,
Be ye the defenders now of the sea-swift ships from the shock
Of the shattering onset-roar, for that Zeus mine hand doth stay,
And the Counsel-father forbiddeth to fight with the foes all day."
Then his chariot-henchman lashed the steeds of the beautiful mane
On to the hollow ships, and they flew exceeding fain.
Foam-flecked were their chests, and beneath all dust-besprent they were,
As forth of the press of the battle the King sore-stricken they bare.
But when Hector marked Agamemnon departing at last from the war,
To the Trojans and Lycians he cried with a great voice pealing afar:
"Trojans and Lycians and Dardans that close in the grapple of fight,
Quit you like men, my friends, and remember your battle-storm-might!
Gone is their champion!—to me is vouchsafed a glory-crown
Of Zeus. On!—speed ye your thunderfoot horses, charging down
On the Danaan mighty men, to win you triumph-renown!"



So cried he, and kindled their courage, and each man's heart beat high
And as huntsman cheereth onward his white-fanged hounds to fly
At the haunch of a wild boar tameless-fierce or a lion at bay,
So cheered he the great-heart Trojans on at the Argive array,
Even Hector the Priamid, like unto Arês the murder-red.
On in the forefront of battle with heart uplifted he sped,
And he swooped on the fight like a roaring blast that with hurricane-sweep
Down-leapeth and lasheth to tempest the face of the dark-blue deep.
Who then was the first, who then was the last, that Priam's seed,
Even Hector, slew, when Zeus vouchsafed him the glory-meed?
Asaius, Autonoüs next, and Opites to Hades he sped;
Agelaus, Opheltius, and Dolops Klytius' son lie dead;
Aisymnus is slain, battle-bider Hipponoüs, Orus withal:
Even these of the Danaan chiefs; on their multitude now doth he fall.
As the West-wind driveth in rout the host of the cloudy rack
Of the dank South, smiting them hard with a tempest lurid-black,—
Wave rolleth on mountain wave, and the scattering foam-crests high
On the blasts of the wind wild-veering drift through the roaring sky;
So drift they, the huddled crests, as his foes before Hector fly.
Then had been havoc, and deeds had been done past helping then,
And amidst of the galleys had fallen the fleeing Achaian men,
But to lord Diomedes Odysseus cried through the rout and the roar:
"What aileth us, Tydeus' son, to remember our prowess no more?
Ho, hither to me, friend!—stand by my side: it were bitter shame
If the ships should be taken of Hector the lord of the helmet of flame!"

Then unto him made answer and spake Diomedes the strong:
"I will verily stay and abide the battle; howbeit not long
Shall we joy therein, forasmuch as the Cloudrack-king of the sky
Not unto us, but the Trojans, willeth the victory."
He spake, and he hurled with his javelin, and cleft Thymbraius' heart,
And dashed him to earth from his car, the while of Odysseus' dart
Was Molion the charioteer of the slain king laid in the dust.
There left they the dead, having utterly quelled their battle-lust.
Then clashing and clanging they rushed through the rout, as wild boars twain
With dauntless-hardy hearts rush down on the hunters amain;
So turned they to bay destroying their foes, and exceeding fain
The Achaians from Hector the godlike that fled drew breath again.
Then slew they two of the chiefs of the people whom one car bore,
Children of Merops the seer of Perkotê; in prophecy-lore
Was he wisest of men, and he would not his sons should fare to the fray,
To the battle, destroyer of heroes; howbeit they would not obey
Their father's behest, for the fates of black death drew them away.
Even them Diomedes the spear-renowned hath slain, and hath torn
Their glorious arms from the breath-bereft, from the life-forlorn.
Hippodamas now and Hypeirochus down by Odysseus are borne.
Then held Kronion the balance of battle with level sway,
Down-gazing from Ida, and ever on this side and that did they slay.
Then hero Agastrophus, offspring of Priam, was stabbed by the spear
Of Tydeus' son on the hip; for he stayed not his horses anear
To flee from the battle at need, but his spirit was folly-distraught;



For his henchman held them aloof, but himself mid the foremost fought
On-storming afoot, till his soul out of life into death he brought.
But Hector across the ranks keen-glancing, thitherward leapt
Shouting his war-cry: behind him the Trojan battalions swept.
Then saw Diomedes the battle-helper, and shuddered to see;
And straightway he strode to Odysseus' side, and thus spake he:
"Lo, thunderbolt Hector is on us, a rolling ruin-tide!
Come then, let us flinch not before him, his onset let us abide."
He spake, and he swung up his long-shadowed spear, and the shaft he hath sped,
And he smote him, and missed not the mark, for he hurled at Hector's head.
On the crest of the morion it lighted, but brass was foiled by brass,
That it reached not his flesh, forasmuch as it might not prevail to pass
Through the threefold plates of the helmet, the gift of Apollo's hand.
Far backward hath Hector reeled to the midst of his henchman-band;
And he sank to his knees, upborne by his brawny hand on the ground,
And a mist and a blackness of night fell shrouding his eyes around.
But it was so, while Tydeus' son followed far through the forefront of fight
The leap of his lance, to the place where it stood in the earth deep-pight,
Then Hector again gat breath, and aback hath he leapt to his car,
And he plunged mid the host of his men, from the black death fleeing afar.
Then with his lance rushing onward did strong Diomedes cry:
"Ha, thou hast fled from the death, thou dog!—but thy bane came nigh,
Full nigh thee! 'Tis Phoebus Apollo again hath saved thee, I trow:
Of a surety thou prayest him, ere to the hurtling of lances thou go.
I will yet make an end of thee!—yea, we shall meet, and our strife shall be striven,

If with me too haply a helper be found of the dwellers in heaven.
Now will I set on the rest, whosoe'er to mine hands shall be given."
He spake, and he fell to the spoiling of Paion's son spear-famed.
Then Alexander the lord of Helen the fair-tressed aimed
His arrow against that shepherd of folk, even Tydeus' child:
For against a pillar he leaned on the barrow a nation had piled
For Ilus, Dardanus' son, a prince of the olden day.
Now the hero from mighty Agastrophus' breast was tearing away
The corslet's gleaming sheen, and the shield from his shoulders he rent,
And the massy helmet:—but now was the bow to a deep arch bent,
And the arrow leapt forth: not in vain from the hand of the archer it flew,
On the flat of his right foot lighting, and pierced it through and through,
That it stood in the earth. Then loud laughed Paris in triumph-glee;
Forth of his ambush he sprang, and with vaunting words spake he: [dart
"Thou art smitten!—not vainly mine arrow hath flown!—would God my
Had taken thy life away, deep-plunging into thine heart!
Then peradventure the Trojans had gotten some respite from bale,
Who tremble before thee, as bleating goats at a lion quail."
But undismayed Diomedes the strong made answer in scorn:
"Thou bow-churl railer, thou gazer at girls, who dost glory in horn,
If man against man in the harness of war thou wouldst try my might,
Naught should avail thee thy bow, nor the hail of the arrow-flight.
But now hast thou grazed but my foot, and thou vauntest in empty joy!
I reck not: 'tis even as a woman should smite, or a witless boy.
A dastard, a niddering slave—tush, vain is the shaft of such!



Not in such wise from mine hand, how lightly soever it touch,
The keen dart flieth, but straightway bereaveth a man of his life;
And torn by her frenzied hands are the cheeks of his widowed wife,
And his children be fatherless: he with his blood red-staining the ground
Lieth to rot: more vultures than women about him be found."

Then cometh and standeth before him Odysseus the spear-renowned:
And behind him he sat him adown, and the shaft keen-whetted he drew
From his foot, and with grievous pangs was the hero's flesh thrilled through.
And he sprang to his chariot, and bade his henchman to turn again
Unto the hollow ships, for his heart was sore in pain.

And Odysseus the spear-renowned was left alone: there was none
That abode by his side of the Argives, for fear had seized each one.
Sorely disquieted then to his own stout heart he said:
"Ah me, what now shall befall me?—ill were it done if I fled
Yon rabble in fear!—yet worse should it be alone to be taken.
Other Danaans flee, for their hearts by Kronion are panic-shaken.
Howbeit what do I, communing in this vile sort with mine heart?
For I know that it is but the cowards that forth of the battle depart:
But whoso playeth the man in the fight must needs, I trow,
Unflinchingly stand, whether smitten he be, or have smitten his foe."

In the thoughts and intents of his heart as he wavered doubtful-souled,
On came the Trojan shields, ever nearer the war-surge rolled; [hold.
And they hemmed him around—but their bane thereby in their midst did they
As when stalwart hunters and hounds have encompassed a wild boar's lair,
Till, bursting out of the deep dark covert, behold, he is there

Whetting his gleaming tusks from his grinning jaws as they flash :
Forthright they beset him, and clear through the tumult the tusks' fierce clash
Ringeth, but stoutly they bide his terrible onset-dash ;
Even so did the Trojans beset Odysseus to Zeus most dear.
Then first upon Dêiopites the princely he leapt with his spear,
And thrust with the keen brass down on his shoulder, and pierced it through.
Thereafter on Thoön and Ennomus swiftly he turned, and slew.
Thereafter Chersidamas, soon as he leapt from his car to the ground,
In the navel he stabbed with his spear 'neath his buckler's boss-starred round ;
And in agony clutching the earth with his palm was he rolled in the dust.
These left he to lie, and at Charops he smote with a swift spear-thrust,
The true blood-brother of Sokus the high-born, Hippasus' son.
Then came for his rescuing Sokus, a godlike-goodly one ;
And he drew full nigh to the hero, and hailed him in act to spoil :
" Odysseus the famous in story, insatiate of guile and of toil,
Either to-day shalt thou vaunt thee o'er sons of Hippasus twain,
Of the laying of two such champions low, of their battle-gear ta'en,
Or shalt lose thy life peradventure by my spear smitten and slain."
At the round of his shapely shield a furious thrust hath he sped :
Crashed through the glittering buckler the great spear's thunderbolt head :
Unswerving it burst through the corslet with curious work rich-decked,
And all the flesh from his ribs hath it torn ; yet its fury was checked,
That it pierced not the hero's bowels, by Pallas Athênê's power.
And Odysseus knew that the end had found him not in that hour ;
And he drew back a step, and to Sokus he cried undaunted of cheer :



"Wretch, surely there cometh upon thee destruction sudden-sheer!
Of a truth hast thou wrought that in battle with Trojans no more I may stand;
But for thee—I tell thee that slaughter and black death dealt by my hand
Shall be wreaked on thee here, and thou by my javelin dashed to the ground
Shalt give glory to me, and thy soul unto Hades the steed-renowned."
He spake, and that other had turned him to flee in sudden fear;
But even as he turned plunged into his back Odysseus' spear
'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it brake.
Loud-crashing he fell, and Odysseus the godlike in triumph spake:
"Ha Sokus the war-wise horse-queller's seed, thou Hippasus' son,
Thy swiftness might flee not the death-doom-end, nor thy wiliness shun!
Ah wretch, it is not thy sire, nor thy mother the lady fair,
That shall close thine eyes death-staring: raw-ravening fowl of the air [wings:
Shall rend thee, o'erglooming thy carcase with flap of their thick-thronging
But my pyre, if I die, shall be reared by Achaia's heroes and kings."
He spake, and thereafter the spear of the war-wise Sokus he drew
Forth of the flesh and the shield that the thunderbolt head cleft through.
Out spirted the blood as he drew it, and troubled his spirit sore.
But so soon as the great-heart Trojans beheld Odysseus' gore,
Rang a shout through their ranks, and they closed on the hero on every side.
And Odysseus gave back from their onset, and loud to his comrades he cried:
Thrice did he shout, as loud as the throat of man might call:
Upon Arês-beloved Menelaus' ear did his cry thrice fall.
Unto Aias forthright, as he fought by his side, Menelaus spoke:
"Telamonian Aias the Zeus-descended, captain of folk,

There hath rung through mine ears the steadfast-hearted Odysseus' shout ;
And suchlike it seemed unto me as the Trojans had hemmed him about,
And were pressing him hard alone in the mighty grapple of fight. [plight ;
Let us speed through the press : it were best that we helped our comrade's
For I fear lest mischief befall him alone mid the Trojan host,
Lest sore be the Danaans' grief for their valiant hero lost."

So spake he, and led, and followed him Aias, a godlike wight.
Then found they Odysseus, and pressed on him Trojans to left and to right,
As amidst of the mountains the tawny jackals close on a hart,
On a stately-antlered stag, sore hurt by the death-winged dart
From a hunter's bow ; yet his fleetness of foot hath availed him to flee
So long as his blood ran warm and the lithe limbs bounded free :
But when by the shaft that he cannot outrun his strength is spent,
In a mountain-forest dark have the wild dogs caught him and rent.
But lo, God bringeth a lion, a ravin-king, that way ;
Then scatter the jackals in dread, and the lion devoureth the prey ;
Even so that day on Odysseus the war-wise, the master of guile,
Trojans full many and stalwart pressed, and the hero the while
Rushing this way and that with his spear thrust backward the pitiless hour.
Lo, nigh to him Aias came, on-bearing the shield like a tower,
And stood by him : scattered the Trojans this way and that way in dread.
Then grasped Menelaus his hand, and forth of the press hath he led,
Till his henchman-charioteer came driving the steeds to his side.
But Aias hath leapt on the Trojans, and straightway Doryklus died,
A bastard begotten of Priam : through Pandokus' heart hath he thrust :



Lysander and Pyrasus stabbed he ; Pylartes he laid in the dust.
And as when some river in flood goeth pouring adown to the plain
From the mountains, a winter-torrent swelled by the heaven-sent rain,
And many a sapless oak, and many a tall pine-tree
Down the whirl of its waters is hurled as it sweepeth the silt to the sea ;
So Aias the glorious then went chasing the rout of the foe
O'er the plain, slaying horses and men : but nothing did Hector know
Thereof, forasmuch as he fought on the left of the warring host,
By the banks of the river Skamander, for there was the havoc most
As men's heads fell, and the shouting as fire unquenchable rose
Round Nestor the mighty and dauntless Idomeneus grappling with foes.
In the heart of the battle was Hector, and dread were his mighty deeds
As he wasted the ranks with his spear and the charge of his chariot-steeds.
Yet had the godlike Achaians still pressed Ilium-ward,
Had not the prince Alexander, the fair-tressed Helen's lord,
At Machaon the war-chief's shieldless shoulder speeding the flight
Of a three-barbed arrow, stayed him amidst of the triumph of fight.
Then sorely they feared for his sake, the Achaians breathing might,
Lest a captive he fall mid the foes in the turning of battle's tide.
Forthright thereupon unto Nestor the godlike Idomeneus cried :
" O Nestor Neleus' son, Achaia's crown of pride,
Up, get thee upon thy car ; let Machaon mount at thy side :
And thy thunderfoot horses drive to the ships with thine uttermost speed ;
For more than a multitude availeth the leech for our need,
When the shaft sticketh deep in the flesh, when the healing salve must be spread."

Then hearkened Gerenia's horseman Nestor to do as he said.
He hath mounted his chariot, and onward bearing Machaon it rolled,
The son of Asklêpius the leech, the glorious healer of old.
And he lashed those coursers fleet, and with eager speed they flew
To the hollow ships—yea, fain was their spirit so to do.
Then ware was Kebrionês of the rout of the Trojan folk,
As in Hector's chariot he rode, and with eager lips he spoke:
"Lo Hector, here be we rifting the Danaan ranks asunder
On the skirts of the hideous-yelling fight, but the Trojans yonder
Are hurled in confusion of rout, both hero and battle-car,
By Aias Telamon's son: well know I the man from afar
By the shoulders that bear the broad tower-shield:—nay then, let us turn
Thither the steeds and the car where most doth the war-rage burn
Of chariot-fighters and footmen hurling their hate at their foes
As they slay, while as quenchless flame the roar of it heavenward goes."
Then the car-steeds beautiful-maned with the whistling thong he lashed,
And they hearkened the voice of the scourge, and away and away they dashed
To the strife of Achaian and Trojan speeding the rushing car,
Trampling the corpses and shields, and with blood was the axle-bar
All spattered beneath, and blood on the rails of the chariot rained,
Upsplashed from the crimson pools as the thundering hoofs on-strained,
Whirled wide from the madding tires. On rushed he battle-athirst
To leap mid the ranks and to rend them: with ruinous tumult he burst
On the Danaans: nowise by dread of the spear was his onrush barred.
On went the hero through ranks of the foemen, and ever he warred



With the lightning of spears, with the flame of the sword, with the huge rock-
Only from battle he shrank with Aias Telamon's son, [shard.
For that Zeus had been angered if Hector had fought with a mightier one.
But Allfather enthroned on high made Aias panic-stung.
Astonied he stood, and behind him the sevenfold shield he flung:
And he quailed as he glanced at the war-press, and like to a beast at bay
To this side and that side he turned him, and foot by foot gave way.
And even as the herdmen-folk and the watch-dogs drive from the fold,
From the garth of the kine, a tawny lion ravin-bold,
As they watch through the livelong night, neither suffer the forest-king
To seize on the choice of the herd, but for flesh mad-hungering
Ever on them he rusheth, yet naught he prevaileth, so thick and fast
Leap in his face the darts by the hands undaunted cast,
And the blazing brands that he dreadeth, how furious-fain soe'er,
Till at dawn sore chafing and grudging in spirit aback must he fare;
So chafing at heart from the Trojans Aias backward bore
Bitterly loth, for he feared for Achaia's ships full sore.
And as when by a cornfield faring an ass, upon whose dull hide
Many staves have been broken, o'ermastereth boys that would turn him aside,
And he entereth in, and he wasteth the crop, while the children smite
The spoiler with cudgels, but nothing availeth their puny might,
And hardly when stayed is his craving for corn may they drive him away;
Even so upon Aias the mighty, Telamon's son, that day
Did Troy's proud sons and their helpers from many a nation charge,
Evermore, as they pressed on him, stabbing with lances the midst of his targe.

And in Aias now did the war-wrath-flame rekindling leap,
And he turned him and stayed the battalions amidst of the onset-sweep
Of the horse-quelling foe: now flightward again would he turn his feet;
Yet, fight he or flee, he barred the path of their host to the fleet.
Even there 'twixt the ranks of Achaia and Troy did the hero stand
Furious-battling, and spears from many a valiant hand
Plunged into the broad shield some, as onward they leapt amain,
And into the earth sank many, or ever their flight might attain
The goal of his flesh, and they quivered athirst for the blood of the slain.
But Eurypylus, glorious son of Evaimon, beheld that sight,
How the hero with thick-coming darts sore pressed was in evil plight:
And he came and he stood by his side, and he hurled with his lance flame-bright;
Upon Phausias' son Apisaon, a shepherd of folk, did it light,
In his liver, the midriff beneath, and unstrung was his strength by the spear.
And Eurypylus rushed to strip from his shoulders his battle-gear.
But when prince Alexander the godlike beheld him in act to strip
From dead Apisaon his mail, then strained he his bow in his grip
On Eurypylus: swift to his rightward thigh did the arrow fly;
And the reed snapped off, but a bitter burden abode in his thigh.
Straightway to the band of his comrades he drew back, shunning the death,
And he shouteth with far-ringing voice to the Danaan men, and he saith:
"Friends, princes of Argive men, and chiefs of their war-array,
Turn you about and stand, and defend from the pitiless day
Aias, for now is he sorely bestead with the darts, and I trow
He will flee not the deadly din of the fight:—stand firmly, ho,



For the rescue of Aias the mighty, Telamon's son, from the foe!"
So cried Eurypylus arrow-smitten, and they at his shout
Cast on their shoulders their shields, and they compassed the hero about,
Outstretching their spears. Then Aias to meet his comrades strode,
And he turned him about in their midst, and the battle of Troy he abode.
So with the ravening fury of blazing fire fought they.
But Nestor the mares Neleian sweating bare from the fray,
And Machaon the shepherd of folk therewithal sped they in the car.
Then fleetfoot Achilles the godlike was ware of him, looking from far.
For he stood on the huge dark bulk of his ship, on the stern high-raised,
And over the desperate toil and the woe-fraught strife he gazed.
And unto his comrade Patroclus straightway his voice hath he sent
From his ship far-shouting, and heard him Patroclus, and forth of his tent
Came, like to the War-god:—his bane in the selfsame hour was begun.
Then first to the hero spake Menoitius' stalwart son:
"Why dost thou call me, Achilles, and what wouldst thou have me to do?"
Made answer Achilles the swift to his comrade tried and true:
"Menoitius' godlike son, right dear to the heart of me,
Now the Achaians, I ween, beseeching shall crouch at my knee;
For a mighty constraint that may not be withstood is come on them now.
Go, prithee, Patroclus the Zeus-loved, of Nestor question thou
Who shall it be that he beareth stricken from battle-wrack,
Of a truth as Machaon he seemed unto me that beheld but his back,
Even Asklêpius' son, but I saw not the face of the man,
For the steeds flashed past in a moment as onward-straining they ran."

He spake, and the word of his dear-loved friend did Patroclus obey,
And he hasted and ran to the tents and the ships of Achaia's array.
Now when they to the tent of Neleus' son were come from the war,
On the earth's all-fostering floor they lighted down from the car;
And the steeds of the ancient hero Eurymedon led aside
From the yoke, and the sweat of their toil from their tunics the warriors dried,
As they stood in the breeze by the shore of the sea: thereafter they hied
Into the tent, and on seats did they sit them adown to rest.
Then mixed them a summer-draught Hekamêdê the lovely-tressed,
Whom the ancient received when Achilles smote strong Tenedos' wall,
The child of Arsinoüs mighty of heart; that war-won thrall
The Achaians gave unto him who in counsel was chiefest of all.
So in front of the heroes a beautiful table first did she place,
With its feet of the cyanus wrought, fair-burnished: a basket of brass
Did she set, and a scallion to blend with the wine, sharp savour with sweet,
And amber honey she served, and the hallowed meal of the wheat;
And a beautiful cup from the old king's palace-treasure-store,
With golden bosses bestarred, and the ears thereof were four.
Two golden doves bent over the brim upon either hand
Of each, as to sip of the bowl, and beneath was a twofold stand.
That mighty mazer another would strain from the table to shift
Wine-brimmed, which Nestor the old would with effortless strength uplift.
So the woman fair as a goddess mixed them the draught, and she stirred
The Pramnian wine therein, and she grated the goat's milk curd
With a brazen grater, and sprinkled thereover the barley white,



And she bade them to drink, so soon as the draught was ready-dight.
So when they had drunken thereof the fire of their thirst to slake,
Then took they delight of discourse as each unto other they spake.
And behold, at the tent-door stood Patroclus, a godlike wight;
And the ancient beheld, and he sprang from the high-seat glittering-bright.
And he drew him within by the hand, and unto a chair would have led,
Howbeit Patroclus spake the word of denial, and said:
"No sitting for me, Zeus-fostered ancient; thou shalt not prevail.
He is worship-worthy and dread who hath sent me to hear the tale
Of the shaft-stricken hero thou bring'st,—yet his name needeth not to be told;
For this is Machaon the shepherd of folk that mine eyes behold.
But now to Achilles with tidings hereof must I straightway return.
Thou knowest full well, Zeus-fostered sire, how terribly stern
Is the hero: he would not spare to upbraid where blame was none."
Answered him Nestor, Gerenia's chariot-lord spake on:
"And why doth Achilles pity the sons of Achaia so,
Even such of our host as be smitten with darts?—what, doth he not know
What grief hath arisen throughout our array?—for our mightiest here
Mid the galleys are lying with arrows smitten, or stabbed with the spear.
Strong Tydeus' son Diomedes is hurt by a shaft from the string,
Spear-stabbed is Odysseus the lance-famed, and Agamemnon the king:
On the thigh is Eurypylus smitten withal by an arrow's flight;
And another, this man, but now have I brought from the midst of the fight
Hurt by a shaft from the cord. But Achilles, for all his might,
Not for the Danaans careth, nor pitieth he their plight.

What, will he wait till the sea-swift ships on the wave-washed coast
Be aglow with the ravening fire in despite of the Danaan host,
And slaughtered one on another we fall?—for my strength no more
Is like unto that which my lithe limbs had in the days of yore.
Ah that I had but my youth, and my strength unwasted as then
When rose grim feud 'twixt the folk of my country and Elis' men
For a cattle-foray, when stricken Itymoneus fell by my hand,
Hypeirochus' stalwart son, the abider in Elis-land,
When I drave the spoil, and he, as he stood in defence of his kine,
Mid the foremost was struck by a lance from this right hand of mine:
Down fell he, and trembled the yeomen-folk in sore dismay.
Then forth of their plain did we gather and drive a mighty prey,
Even fifty herds of their kine, and as many flocks of their sheep,
And fifty of swine and of goats from the harried plain did we sweep,
And chestnut steeds therewithal a hundred and fifty we won;
There were none but were mares, and by many an one did a young foal run.
These drave we in triumph through Nelian Pylos' gate in the night,
And on to the citadel: stirred was Neleus' soul with delight
For the great spoil won by his son at his first going forth unto war.
And at dawning the heralds proclaimed with clear voice pealing afar
That all men should come that of Elis the hallowed had claim of a debt.
Thereafter gathered the chieftains, the lords of the Pylians met,
And they parted the spoil, for to many a debt the Epeians owed,
Who had evil-entreated us, the few that in Pylos abode.
For Herakles' might had come down on our people, and grimly oppressed



The land in the years overpast, and slain were our bravest and best.
Twelve sons were we, unto Neleus the princely born in his hall:
I only was left, for in battle did all my brethren fall.
And pride-uplifted thereby the Epeians brass-mail-dight
Wrought tyrannous wrong, and devised for us deeds of mischief and spite.
And the old king chose him a herd of kine, and a mighty flock
Of sheep; three hundred he took, and with these their shepherd-folk.
For to him out of Elis the hallowed a debt full heavy was due,
Four guerdon-winning steeds, and the chariot withal that they drew,
When for prizes they came, when their lord for a tripod had sent them to race:
Howbeit Augeias, the king of men, in the selfsame place
Seized them, and sent their driver away sore grieved for his steeds.
And the old king, bitterly wroth for despiteful words and deeds,
Chose for him booty untold, but the rest to his people he left
To divide it, that none might upbraid, of his rightful portion bereft.
So meetly we ordered it all, and about our burg did we slay
Gifts to the Gods: then came, when the third dawn brought the day,
The host of our foes and their thunderfoot horses in full array:
And amidst them the twin Molions were girded with harness of fight,
But as yet were they striplings, and skilless as yet of battle-might.
Now a city there is, Thryoessa, a crag-built burg of war;
On the marches of Pylos the sandy it stood by Alpheius afar.
Round about it they camped, mad-eager to rase that war-fenced town.
But when they had marched through the plain, from Olympus rushing down
Came Athênê by night, bidding arm us to meet that peril nigh;

And nowise loth were our folk when she cried the gathering cry,
But exceeding fain of the battle were they: yet Neleus denied
That his son should array him for fight, and my chariot-steeds did he hide,
For he deemed that in wisdom of war as yet was I over-young;
But for all this, glory I won mid our car-borne warrior-throng,
Albeit on foot, for the battle was swayed of Athênê so.
Now a river there is, Minyeius, and down to the sea doth it go
Anigh to Arênê, and there the Dawn divine we abode
With the chariots of Pylos, while onward the war-flood of footmen flowed.
Then with our gathered array, full-harnessed in brazen gleam,
We came when the sun was high to Alpheius' sacred stream.
There unto might-throned Zeus fair victims slaughtered we,
And a bull to Alpheius, a bull to Poseidon the Lord of the Sea;
But a heifer to Queen Athênê the flashing-eyed did we slay.
Then squadron by squadron we supped in the place where the war-host lay;
And armour-sheathed we slept by the river whose waters rolled
Murmuring by, the while the Epeians mighty-souled
Beleaguered the town, mad-eager to lay her ramparts low:
But a mighty deed of war ere then was revealed to the foe:
For so soon as over the earth-plain the sun uplifted his light,
Unto Zeus we prayed and Athênê, and clashed in the thunder of fight.
And scarce was the strife of the Pylian men and Epeians begun,
When I smote down the first of the foe, and his thunderfoot horses I won,
Even Mulius the spearman: by marriage was he to Augeias allied,
Whose eldest child Agamêdê the golden-haired was his bride;



All herbs of healing she knew that be nursed on the earth-plain wide.
On came he—I sped to his heart the brazen lance's flight.
Down fell he in dust, and I on his chariot sprang forthright;
And I stood mid the forefighters. Then the Epeian men of renown
Quaked in confusion of panic, beholding him stricken down,
The chieftain of chariots, their champion, their stay mid the battle-wrack.
Then I charged on the foe with the sweep of the hurricane lurid-black,
And fifty chariots I took, and from each car heroes twain
Rolled gnashing their teeth in the dust of death, by my war-spear slain.
Yea, the Molions of Aktor's line by mine hand had died,
But the Wide-dominioned, who shaketh the earth with his thunder-tide,
Their father, snatched them from war, and in deep mist veiled them from sight.
Then Zeus to the Pylian men vouchsafed the victory-might.
Onward and onward we chased their rout through the plain wide-spread,
Slaying the men, and spoiling the fair war-gear of the dead,
Till over Buprasion's lea wheat-wealthy the war-waves flowed,
Till to Olenus' rock and Aleision's tower-crowned crag we rode.
There backward Athênê turned our host on the homeward way:
There slew I, there left I, the last of the foe: but Achaia's array
From Buprasion to Pylos drave their steeds swift-footed again;
And of Godfolk 'twas Zeus that they praised, it was Nestor they praised among men.
Such was I, if ever I lived, among men. But Achilles will reap
The fruit of his prowess alone: ah surely, I ween, shall he weep
Sorely with ruth for the folk when they perish utterly.
O friend, of a truth did Menoitius lay this charge upon thee,

In the day when from Phthia he sent thee for King Agamemnon's feud,
And Odysseus the godlike and I 'neath the selfsame roof-tree stood,
As he spake in his halls, and we hearkened to all his charging the while:—
For we came unto Peleus' palace, the stately-builded pile,
As we gathered the host through Achaia the land of women fair.
So we came to his halls, and the hero Menoitius found we there,
And thee with Achilles. And Peleus the chariot-champion grey
Unto Zeus the thunder-triumphant was burning the thighs that day
Of kine in the garth of his court, and a chalice of gold he bore,
And thereout on the altar-blaze the flame-flushed wine did he pour.
Ye twain were dividing the carcase: and over the threshold we stept,
And we stood in the door: to his feet in amazement Achilles leapt.
Then grasped he our hands, and he led us within, and he bade to a seat,
And he set before us the guest-fare, whatso for strangers is meet.
But so soon as our souls were filled with delight of the wine and the roast,
I spake of our counsel, and prayed you to follow to war with the host.
Full fain were ye then, and your fathers charged you with earnest heed:
Yea, Peleus the ancient charged Achilles his hero-seed
Ever upward to strive to the highest, and still to be best of the best:
And to thee Menoitius Aktor's son gave thus his behest:
'My son, of his lineage Achilles is sprung of the princelier line,
But thou art the elder-born: yet his prowess is far above thine.
Then speak to him words of wisdom, and whisper his stormier mood,
And point him the way he should go: he will hearken to thee for his good.'
So counselled the ancient, but ah, thou forgettest: yet now, even now,



To Achilles the wise, if he haply will hear thee, thus speak thou.
Who can tell but his heart shall awaken, that God will cause him to heed
Thy pleading?—a blessing there is when the lips of the loving plead.
But and if 'tis a prophecy haunteth his soul with a vision of fear,
If his mother have told some fateful warning of Zeus in his ear,
Yet thee at the least let him send: let his Myrmidon ranks to the war
Follow thee; so shalt thou rise on our host a deliverance-star.
Yea, let him give thee his goodly harness to bear to the fray,
Peradventure the Trojans will deem thou art he, and will shrink in dismay
From the fight, and a breathing-space to Achaians sore distrest
Shall be given, for short is the time in the battle for breathing or rest;
And ye, the unwearied, might drive the foe with the war-toil spent
Lightly aback to the city afar from galley and tent."

So spake he, and stirred was the heart in Patroclus' breast by his rede,
And he turned him to run to the ships, to Achilles Aiakus' seed.
But when to the ships he was come of Odysseus the godlike king,
As he ran, to the place of the council-stead and the judgment-ring,
Where the altars stood, by Achaians reared to the dwellers on high,
There met him Eurypylus, offspring of Zeus, as he passed thereby.
Smit with a shaft in the thigh slow came Evaimon's son
Halting from battle, and down did the sweat of his labour run
Streaming from shoulders and head, and forth of the grim gash flowed
The blood dark-welling, howbeit his mind unshaken abode.
And Menoitius' stalwart son beheld him pity-stirred,
And he made lamentation thereover, and spake the swift-winged word:

"Ah hapless men, ye princes and chiefs of the Danaan war!
How are ye doomed, far off from your friends and your fatherland-shore,
With the fat of the mighty to glut swift hounds, before Troy as ye lie!
Come, Hero Eurypylus, fostered of Zeus, to mine asking reply—
Shall the men of Achaia yet make Hector the giant refrain,
Or perish in this same hour by his spear overmastered and slain?"

Unto him did Eurypylus prudent in spirit answering say:
"No longer, Patroclus the Zeus-born, shall any battle-stay
For Achaians be found, but amidst of their dark-hulled ships shall they fall.
For they that in days overpast were our mightiest, even they all,
Shaft-smitten or stabbed, mid the galleys are lying, wounded sore
By the hands of the Trojans, and waxeth the might of the foe evermore.
But be thou my deliverer: unto my black ship help me hence; [cleanse
And cut thou the shaft from my thigh, and with warm streams thence do thou
The black-clotted gore, and salves pain-soothing thereon do thou lay,
Those precious balms the which thou hast learnt of Achilles, they say.
Whom Cheiron the Centaur, the peerless in righteousness, wont to teach.
For Machaon and Podaleirius, cunning in craft of the leech—
Of these mid the tents lieth one, with his strength by a wound brought low,
And himself of the hand of the healer is sorely in need, I trow:
In the plain yet bideth the other the fierce war-wrath of the foe."

And Menoitius' stalwart son made answer thereunto:
"But how shall the thing be accomplished?—Eurypylus, how shall we do?
Even now to Achilles the war-wise bearing a message I speed,
With the word of Achaia's warder, Gerenian Nestor's rede:—



Yet not even so will I leave thee alone in thy grievous need."

He spake, and beneath the breast did he clasp that chieftain, and led
To his tent, and the skins of kine on the ground did a henchman spread.
So Patroclus laid him thereon, and he cut from the thigh with his sword
The cruel-keen shaft, and over the gash warm water he poured,
Cleansing the gore, and a bitter, a pain-slaying root hath he laid,
Bruised in his hands, thereon, and an utter end hath it made
Of his pangs, and the wound 'gan dry, and the flow of his blood was stayed.

BOOK XII.

Of the rampart-storming, till Hector bursteth the gates asunder.

IN suchwise amidst of the tents Menoitius' stalwart son
Was healing Eurypylus arrow-stricken: but still fought on
Argives and Trojans in grappling battalions, nor long was it doomed
That the moat of the Danaan men, by the broad wall's frown overgloomed,
Should defend them, the which they had made for a shield to the ships, and had
The trench-line round, but hecatombs none to the Gods had they given, [driven
That they and their sea-swift ships, and the wealth of their war-won prey
Might be safe therewithin: in despite of the Gods that abide for aye
Was it builded: for this cause short was the time that unmarred it abode.
While Hector yet was alive, and Achilles' wrath-flame glowed,
And the city of Priam the King yet stood unwasted of foes,
So long unruined Achaia's stately rampart rose.
But when Troytown's mightiest children of light and of life were bereft,
And many an Argive was death-overborne, and a remnant was left,
And Priam's town in the tenth of the years in ruin fell,



And the Argives were gone to their fatherland over the broad sea-swell,
Then did Poseidon the Lord of the Sea and Apollo take thought
To waste that rampart, and thither the strength of the rivers they brought,
Even all that from Ida's heights down-hurrying seaward fall,
Rhesus and Heptaporus and Karêsus and Rhodius withal,
Grênikus, Aisêpus, Skamander withal, that flood of renown,
And Simoïs stream, whereby there had fallen in dust stricken down
Shields many, and helms, and the corpses of men of a godlike race.
The mouths of them all did Apollo turn to the selfsame place.
Nine days did he hurl at the rampart their floods, and Zeus the while
Rained ever, the sooner to whelm in the sea that mighty pile:
And the Earth-shaker's self with his trident in hand afront of them went,
And all the foundations thereof adown the waves he sent,
Where the toiling Achaians had laid them with massy stone and beam:
And he levelled and made all smooth by broad-flowing Hellespont's stream;
And again did he cover the wide-spread beach with the tokenless sand, [hand,
When the rampart was scattered, and backward the rivers were turned by his
That their fair-flowing waters might murmur again as of old through the land.

So was Poseidon to work his will in the coming day
With Apollo:—but then was the roar of the onset, the flame of the fray,
By the giant rampart, and ever the beams of the towers rang loud
'Neath the blows, and the Argives now by the scourge of Zeus were cowed,
That amidst of the hollow ships were they penned, and sorely bestead,
From Hector the mighty, the panic-wafter, shrinking adread,
While he fought like a tempest in stormy fury, even as before.

And as when in the midst of the hounds and the ring of the hunters a boar
Or a lion raging in strength turneth this way and that at bay,
While closeth around like a fortress-wall his foes' array
Fronting him still, while thick and fast from the strong hands dart
The javelins, howbeit not once doth his dauntless-haughty heart
Falter nor fail him, whom yet that aweless courage shall slay:
Ofttimes he turneth about, that hedge of the spears to essay,
And whithersoever he turneth, the ranks of men give way;
So Hector cried on his war-fellows, rushing from rank to rank,
Ever cheering them on to pass that trench. But his fleet steeds shrank
From the terrible leap, and with quivering limbs they stood and neighed,
Wildly they neighed on the brink, for the broad moat made them afraid.
Yea, sooth was it nowise easy to cross nor to overleap,
For that all adown its length banks dark-overhanging and steep
Rose upon either hand, and above was the grim palisade
Of the sharp stakes set, for a fence by the sons of Achaia arrayed:
Close-ranged were they, great withal, the onset of foemen to bar;
Thereby not lightly a steed, as he strained at the swift-wheeled car,
Might enter, howbeit the footmen were fain to accomplish the deed.
Then Polydamas came unto Hector the valiant, and uttered his rede:
"Hector, and all ye captains of Troy and her warrior-aid,
To drive swift steeds through the trench were a deed but in madness essayed
Hard is it, hard to be passed, for therein do the sharp stakes stand,
And beyond them riseth the wall of the sons of Achaia-land.
No chariot might plunge to its depths, that the riders should fight therein,



For strait is the space: 'tis a pit of wounds and of death, I ween.
Now if Zeus high-thundering goeth about to destroy this day
Our foes in his wrath, and is minded to succour the Trojan array,
Of a truth I were fain that their doom in an instant should suddenly come,
That here the Achaians renownless should perish afar from their home.
But and if they shall rally, and if from the ships they shall turn them about,
And into the deep-delved trench we shall fall in confusion of rout,
Never more shall so much as a messenger win back thence, I trow,
To tell in the city how rallied Achaia against her foe.
But come now, as I shall counsel, so let us all obey:
Our steeds on the brink of the trench let our chariot-henchmen stay;
In our harness on foot let us follow the battle-rifting stride
Of Hector, shoulder to shoulder: our charge will they nowise abide,
If the meshes of doom be indeed drawn about them on every side."
Then good was Polydamas' prudent counsel in Hector's sight:
Straightway he leapt from his chariot to earth in his war-gear dight.
Yea, nor abode the rest of the Trojans in chariot-throng,
But as one man earthward they sprang, seeing Hector the godlike-strong.
Then to the charioteers each chieftain gave command
To range in order the steeds by the trench, and to have them in hand.
Then they marshalled them, squadron from squadron parted to left and to right,
And arrayed in battalions five they followed their chiefs to the fight.
With Hector the one troop went, with Polydamas' princely form,
The most and the bravest were these, and the battle's fury-storm
Raged in them to burst through the rampart, and over the galleys to swarm.

And with these twain Kebrionês pressed on: but with Hector's steeds
Was there left one worser than Kebrionês in warrior-deeds.
With Alkathoüs, Paris, Agênor, the second the war-path trod;
And Helenus captained the third, and Dêïphobus fair as a God,
Two children of Priam: with Asius led they the host to the war,
Asius Hyrtakus' son; from Arisbê swept with his car
Great horses with coats like flame, from the stream of Sellêïs afar.
With the valiant son of Anchises the fourth troop battleward hied,
With Aeneas; Antenor's children twain pressed on at his side,
Akamas and Archelochus hight, in all war-cunning wise.
And Sarpedon led to the onset the battle-renowned allies;
And he chose for his helpers Glaukus and Asteropaius the strong,
Forasmuch as in prowess he counted them peerless the host among
Next unto himself, who was matchless mid all Troy's warrior-aid.
So when these, of their war-fellows holpen, with bull-hide shields were arrayed,
On the Danaans charged they: they deemed that their might should be stayed
Till down on the dark-hulled galleys in onset triumphant they bore. [nevermore

Now the rest of the children of Troy and her helpers from far away
Hearken Polydamas' rede, and the wise man's word they obey:
But nowise would Asius Hyrtakus' son to his counsel give ear
To leave by the trench his steeds and his henchman-charioteer;
But on for the sea-swift ships high-borne on his car swept he;
Fool!—for it was not his weird from the blackness of doom to flee,
Nor with chariot and horses aback from the galleys in triumph-joy
Returning again to win to the towers of windy Troy:





Ere then did a fate full ghastly enshroud him in utter gloom
When the spear of Deukalion's scion Idomeneus dealt him his doom.
On to the leftward flank of the galleys he charged amain
Unto where the Achaians with horses and chariots returned from the plain.
Thitherward drave he his thunderfoot steeds and his battle-car :
And he found not the door-leaves shut, neither gript by the massy bar.
For the men stood holding the gates of refuge wide, till the last
Of them from the battle that fled to the ships therethrough should have passed.
Thitherward drave he his horses unswerving, and followed the roar
Of his men wild-cheering behind him : they deemed that their foes nevermore
Should withstand them till down on the galleys in onset triumphant they bore.
Ah fools!—for keeping the gates they found two mightiest ones,
Even the Lapithan spearmen's haughty-hearted sons ;
The one was Peirithoüs' son, Polypoites the mighty of limb,
And Leonteus the other, like unto Arês the murder-grim.
There stood they in front of the high gates keeping the narrow way :
As oak-trees lofty-crested on mountain-heights stood they,
Like the forest-kings that abide evermore the wind and the rain
With their far-spreading roots firm-braced against the stormy strain ;
So they in the thews of their hands putting trust, and in pride of their might,
Abode the oncoming of Asius the giant, and thought not of flight.
 Onward against that huge-built rampart, uplifting on high
Their bull-hide bucklers, they charged with the roar of the battle-cry.
With Iamenus, Asius their king, and Orestes they rushed on the wall,
And with Adamas, Asius' son, with Oinomaus, Thoön withal.

Now the twain for a space were within, and they kindled the mail-clad host
Of the sons of Achaia to fight for the ships, that they should not be lost.
But when they were ware how charged on the rampart the on-rushing foes,
And a shriek and a quaking of panic amidst the Danaans rose,
Forth rushed those twain, and in front of the gateway they battled then,
Like unto fierce wild boars that in some lone mountain-glen
Unquailing abide the oncoming tumult of hunter and hound ;
Forth spring they with sidelong rush, and the saplings crash all round
Snapped short at the roots, and rings out sharp through the din of the strife
The clash of the tusks, till the darts smite out each monster's life ;
Even so on the breasts of the champions rang the brass flame-bright
As the darts rained down, for in dauntless-desperate wise did they fight :
Putting trust in their friends on the wall and the might of their hands they strove,
For their war-fellows hurled down stones from the huge-built towers above,
Beating back from themselves and their tents and their sea-swift galleys the foe.
And even as down to the earth come falling the flakes of the snow
Which the wild wind, driving the dark cloud-rack with the scourge of its blast,
On the all-sustaining earth down-poureth thick and fast,
So poured from their hands the darts by the sons of Achaia cast
And the children of Troy, and ever the helmets harshly rang
By the rock-shards smitten, and still did the boss-starred bucklers clang.
Then wailed aloud and smote with a passionate hand on his thigh
Asius Hyrtakus' son, and he cried an indignant cry :
"Allfather, thou of a truth art a God that lovest a lie!
Yea, for I said in mine heart that Achaia's warrior-bands

Should withstand not our fury of onset, nor stay our resistless hands.
But these, as the wasps lithe-waisted, or bees that make their abode
In the clefts of the rock by the side of a rugged mountain-road
Forsake not their caverned halls, but stubbornly ever stay,
From their young ones essaying to chase the hunter-folk away,
Even so these men from the gates, albeit they are but twain,
Will nowise give back, or ever they slay or be smitten and slain."
So cried he, but not to his crying the spirit of Zeus gave heed,
For that steadfast his will was to give unto Hector the glory-meed.
But the others the while at the several gates grim battle fought:
Hard were it for me as a God to tell of the deeds there wrought.
All down the wall roared up as the flame of a furnace-fire
The storm of the stones: and the Argives, albeit in anguish dire,
Must needs fight on for the galleys, and grieved were the Gods, even they
Who would fain be the battle-shield of the Danaan war-array.
And ever the Lapithae clashed in the onset, and crashed through the fray.
Then Polypoites the stalwart, the son of Peirithoüs, cast,
And his spear through the brazen-plated helmet of Damasus passed,
Neither stayed it the brass of the morion, but onward the lance-point went,
And it burst through the bones of the skull, and within all blood-besprent
Was his brain: so he laid him low though never so battle-fain.
Thereafter did Ormenus fall, and Pylon the giant hath slain.
And Leonteus the scion of Arês hurled at Antimachus' son,
Hippomachus: swift to his baldric unswerving the spear flew on.
From the scabbard thereafter his war-glaive keen that champion swept,

And against Antiphates first through the throng of the battle he leapt.
And he caught him, and smote him, and backward to earth that corpse he threw;
Thereafter Iamenus, Menon withal, and Orestes he slew;
One after other their bodies on all-mother earth did he strew.
While these were spoiling the slain of their harness glittering-bright,
With Polydamas still and with Hector the war-host charged to the fight,
Even they that were bravest and most, and their souls were aflame with desire
To burst through the wall, and to burn the galleys with ravening fire.
Yet still did they tarry in wavering doubt on the brink of the fosse;
For an omen-fowl had appeared as they rushed mad-eager to cross;
For skirting the left of the host did an eagle towering soar,
And a serpent, a blood-red monster, clutched in his talons he bore,
Yet living and struggling, and still was its battle-delight unquelled,
For backward it writhed, while yet in the grip of his claws it was held:
On the breast by the neck did it smite him, and earthward he cast the prey,
Agony-thrilled, and amidst of the throng of the Trojans it lay,
And adown the blasts of the wind he darted with one wild scream.
Then shuddered the Trojans, beholding the serpent's writhing gleam
In the midst of them lying, the portent of Zeus the Aegis-lord.
And to Hector the valiant Polydamas strode with a bodeful word:
"Hector, amidst the assembly thou sharply rebukest me still,
Yea, though I counsel aright;—good sooth, thou accountest it ill
If a man of the people shall cross thee in war or in council-ring,
But we needs must exalt thy might above all questioning.
Yet from that which I deem shall be best will I nowise refrain my lips:—



Press we not onward to fight with the Danaan men for their ships:
For thus shall the end be, I trow, if indeed unto Troy's war-host
This augury-fowl hath appeared when fain were their hearts to have crossed,—
This eagle, the heavenward-soarer, to left of our army that sped,
While gripped in his talons he bare a monstrous snake blood-red,
Alive, yet he suddenly dropped it or ever his eyry he won,
And prevailed not to bear to his eaglets and give them to feast thereon;—
So we, what though through the gates and the rampart Achaian we burst,
With might overmastering, though the Achaians give ground at the first,
Yet in wild disarray shall we flee from the ships by the selfsame way,
And shall leave full many a Trojan behind, whom the foemen shall slay
With the flash of the lightning of brass, defending their ships as they fight.
Yea, thus would a soothsayer tell us, whose heart could interpret aright
The god-sent marvels, a man unto whom the folk should obey."
Then darkly-frowning did Hector the splendour-morioned say:
"Polydamas, not as a friend unto me dost thou speak this day!
Thou lackest not wit for devising of other and wiser rede.
But and if of thine heart's set purpose thou speakest in very deed,
Of a surety the Gods and none other have stolen thy senses, I trow,
Who bidd'st that the counsels of Thunderer Zeus be forgotten now,
Even all that he promised to me, and sealed with the nod of his brow.
But thou, thou would'st have us obey the long-winged fowl of the air!
Go to, unto these have I not respect, and nothing I care
Whether to rightward they go to the sun and the dayspring sky,
Or whether to leftward away to the shadow-gloomed west they fly.

But for us, let us hearken the counsel of Zeus most high, and obey,
Who over the deathling race and the Deathless beareth sway.
One omen of all is best, that we fight for our fatherland!
And for what cause thus of the war and the strife in fear dost thou stand?
What though all we of the host save thee death-stricken shall lie
By the ships of the Argive men, no fear hast thou to die!
No battle-biding spirit hast thou, no heart for the fray!
But thou, if thou hold thee aback from the fight, if thou turn away
With thy cozening words any other to cause him to flinch from the strife,
Craven, forthright stricken through by my spear shalt thou spill thy life."
 Then onward he led, and unearthly-loud did the roar of them ring
As they followed their captain, and Zeus the thunder-triumphant King
From the mountain-heights of Ida uproused a hurricane-blast,
Sweeping the dust-cloud full on the galleys, and faintness he cast
On the hearts Achaian, but glory to Troy and to Hector he gave.
Putting trust in the might of their hands, by the portents of Zeus made brave,
Mightily strove they to shatter Achaia's huge-built wall;
For they tore at the beams of the towers till the battlements shook to their fall,
And with levers they heaved at the buttress-piles, which Achaia's array
First set deep-planted in earth for the great towers' forward-stay.
There tugged they and strained, and with fierce hope flushed was their battle-[wrath
That the wall should be scaled: still flinched not the Danaan men from the path,
But the battlement-breaches with shields of the tough bull-hide did they fence,
And ever they hurled at the onward-storming foes from thence.
 On-cheering Achaia's sons on the towered rampart's height



The Aiantes fared to and fro, and they kindled their battle-might.
And courtesy-honeyed their words were to one, but stern and fierce
To another, whom haply they marked giving back from the meeting of spears:
"Friends, whoso of Argives is chiefest, whoso hath midward place,
Yea, whoso is worse than the rest—for that all of the earthborn race
May nowise be equal in war—this day is there work for you all!
Ye know it yourselves, I ween! Let none by the braggart brawl
Of a foeman dismayed turn back to the ships in craven flight:
Nay, but press forward, and cheer ye your war-fellows on to the fight,
Peradventure Olympian Zeus will vouchsafe us, the Lightning-lord,
To hurl back the onset of Troy, and to chase them cityward."
So in the forefront they shouted, and so was the battle restored.
And as fall on a wintry day thick-thronging the flakes of the snow,
When Zeus the Counsel-father bestirreth himself, to show
Unto men what manner of arrows be shot from his quivers of cloud;—
His winds hath he hushed, and he still snoweth on, till his white pall shroud
High mountain-crests, huge forelands that loom through the laden air,
And the clover-mantled meadows, and men-folk's acres fair;
It is shed on the grey sea's havens, it fringeth the rocky shore,
But the surge-sweep keepeth it back; all else is covered o'er
With its veil, when heavily earthward the shower of Kronion doth pour;
So flew thick-thronging the stones by foes fast hurled against foes,
These down on the Trojans hailing, from Troy on Achaia those:
O'er all the rampart the roar of the rattling thunder rose.
Howbeit not yet had the Trojans and Hector the glorious in war

Burst through the rampart-gates and the grip of the massy bar,
But that Zeus enkindled Sarpedon, the Counsel-father's scion,
To rush on the Argives, as rusheth on wreath-horned heifers a lion.
Straightway before him the round of his shapely shield he held,
Fair-fashioned of hammered brass, which the coppersmith wrought to weld
At his forge, and within stitched fold over fold of the tough bull-hide
With rivets of gold that encompassed it round upon every side;
This cast he before him, and brandishing twin spears forth did he stride.
As a lion mountain-nurtured he went, which hath lacked o'erlong
The savour of flesh, and the dauntless spirit within him is strong
Even to the thick-walled fold, as he prowleth for sheep, to fare:
For though he shall find at his coming the herdmen gathered there [bay,
With their dogs and their spears keeping watch o'er the sheep to hold him at
Yet he will not be chased from the steading or ever he make assay,
Or ever he leap on the flock and snatch from their midst the prey,
Or a sudden-hurling hand with a javelin shall reach him and slay;
Even so was Sarpedon the godlike stirred by the strength of his heart
To leap on the rampart, and burst the battlement-fence apart.
And he cried to Hippolochus' child, unto Glaukus, a prince of the host:
"Glaukus, wherefore have we twain ever been honoured the most
With the chief of the seats, with the wine of the feast, with the choice of the
In Lycia, while all men revere us as though of the Gods we were? [roast,
And by Xanthus' banks we possess a domain both great and fair,
Lovely with orchard-close and with fruitful wheat-sown land.
Wherefore we ought this day in the front of the Lycians to stand

Facing the brunt of the battle, the hottest flame of the fray,
That this one and that of the Lycians corslet-sheathed may say:
'Not in inglorious fashion in Lycia these bear sway,
Even our kings: of a truth on the fatling sheep feast they,
And the choice of the honey-sweet wine: howbeit their battle-might
Is goodly, for lo, mid the foremost champions of Lycia they fight!'
Ah brother, if thou and I—might we 'scape but from this one war—
Were doomed to be ageless thereafter and deathless for evermore,
Then it is not I in the forefront of battle would hazard my life,
Nor thee would I kindle to plunge mid the glory-wafting strife:
But now—for that fates of death unnumbered be standing around, [found—
And none may outrun them, and none that by cunning may shun them is
Let us on, till a foeman, or we by a foe, shall be triumph-crowned!"
So spake he, and turned not Glaukus aside, neither disobeyed:
Straight forward they charged, on-leading the Lycian battle-aid.
And Menestheus, Peteos' scion, beheld them, and shuddered with dread,
For against his tower their onslaught ruin-fraught they sped.
And he glanced down the line of Achaians, if haply his eyes might discern
Some chieftain whose arm from his comrades the tide of destruction might turn.
And lo, the Aiantes twain, the battle-insatiate, he spied
Standing, and Teucer, even as forth of his tent he hied,
Full nigh. Yet he could not be heard, though he sent forth his mightiest shout,
For the din, for the heavenward-soaring roar of the battle-rout,
For the clash of the smitten shield, for the clang of the helmet-crest,
And of gates, for that shut were they all, and ever against them pressed

The Trojans, essaying to burst them and win therethrough to the fleet.
Forthright unto Aias he hastened the herald Thoôtes' feet:
"Run thou, Thoôtes the godlike, and Aias hitherward call,—
Nay rather the twain, for this of a truth should be best of all;—
For the doom of destruction sudden-sheer draweth nigh to us fast;
For the captains of Lycia be on us, the chiefs that in days overpast
Evermore have been mighty in strife, and in onset furious-fain.
But if there too upriseth around them the toil of the battle-strain,
Let Telamon's son, strong Aias, in any wise hitherward speed,
And let Teucer the cunning in bowcraft be with him to succour our need."
Then disobeyed not the herald his bidding, but hearkened with heed.
Swift by the wall of the brazen-harnessed Achaians he ran,
Till beside the Aiantes he stood, and in breathless haste he began:
"Aiantes, ye chiefs of the Argive brazen-harnessed array,
Zeus-fostered Peteos' well-loved son hath bidden me say—
Thither come ye and face, be it but for a little, the toil of the war.
He were fain of you both, for of all things this should be best by far:
For the doom of destruction sudden-sheer draweth nigh to them fast,
For the captains of Lycia be on them, the chiefs that in days overpast
Evermore have been mighty in strife and in onset furious-fain.
But if here too ariseth around you the toil of the battle-strain,
Let Telamon's son, strong Aias, in any wise thitherward speed,
And let Teucer the cunning in bowcraft be with him to succour our need."
So spake he, and Telamon's son great Aias said him not nay,
But he spake to Oïleus' scion the swift-winged word straightway:

"Aias, do ye twain, thou, and with thee Lykomêdês the strong,
Stand firm, to the mighty strife on-cheering the Danaan throng.
But thither will I, the brunt of the battle with these will I bear, | there."
And will speed back again when mine arm shall have wrought deliverance
So did he speak, and Aias Telamon's son was gone,
And beside him Teucer his brother, the selfsame father's son:
And bearing the bow of Teucer Pandion with these departed.
So when they were come to the tower of Menestheus the mighty-hearted,
Passing within the wall—to the sorely bestead were they coming—
Came swarming over the breastwork as hurricane-clouds black-looming
The stalwart captains and warrior-chiefs of their Lycian foes:
Then man against man into battle they hurled, and the war-yell rose.
First Telamonian Aias a man of the Lycians slew,
Epikles the mighty-hearted, Sarpedon's comrade true,
For he hurled with a jagged stone on the height of the wall that lay
Huge, by the breastwork within,—not lightly a man might essay
To bear it with both hands up, were he never so stalwart-young,
Such men as be now,—yet he swung it on high, and he hurled mid the throng.
Through the four-coned helmet it burst, and it crushed the bones of his head
All to a mingled mass, and the life from the frame of him fled,
As headlong down like a diver he plunged from the great tower's height.
Then Teucer at Glaukus, Hippolochus' strong son, sped the flight
Of a shaft, as he leapt on the lofty wall, and there did he smite
Where he spied how his arm was unshielded, and quelled his battle-delight.
Back from the rampart he sprang ere any might mark it, in fear

Lest a foeman should see him smitten, and vaunt with triumph-jeer.
Then came on Sarpedon anguish as Glaukus turned him away,
So soon as he knew: yet the hero forgat not the joy of the fray,
But he drave at Alkmaon the scion of Thestor with deadly aim, [came
And he stabbed him, and plucked out the spear: down-dragged by the lance he
Headlong, and over him rattled his harness with brass rich-dight.
On the breastwork Sarpedon laid hold, and with hands of giant might
Tugged, and in one huge ruin it toppled and fell, and bared
Was the rampart above, and a path for the feet of the host was prepared.
Yet shoulder to shoulder did Aias and Teucer withstand him: the one
Smote with his arrow the baldric athwart his breast that shone
Upbearing his shield; but Zeus from his offspring turned away
Death's doom, that he should not be slain by the sterns of the ships that day.
Then leapt on him Aias, and stabbed at his buckler, but not through the shield
Did the brass cleave; yet with the shock in mid-fury of onset he reeled.
Back from the breastwork a little he drew, yet he would not yield
Wholly therefrom, for his soul with the hope of triumph burned.
But he shouted, as unto the godlike Lycian heroes he turned:

"Ho Lycians, why are ye slack?—is your battle-fire waxen acold?
Hard task should it be for me, were I never so stalwart-bold,
To burst through the rampart, and clear you a path to the ship-fringed shore!
On!—follow with me, for the work shall be lighter when hands shall be more."

So spake he, and they, fear-thrilled by their captain's chiding word,
Battleward pressed the fiercer around that counsel-lord,
And the Argives closed their ranks, and abode them with hearts unquelled

The rampart within; and a toil most mighty of these was beheld.
For neither prevailed the stalwart children of Lycia to lay
The Danaans' rampart low, and to make to the galleys a way,
Nor yet could the Danaan spearmen aback from the rampart beat
The Lycian heroes, when once they had set thereby their feet.
And even as two men strive at the boundary-line of their lands
In a field that is parted between them, with measuring-rods in their hands,
And in narrow space hard wrestle the twain each man for his right;
By the battlements so were they parted, and raged thereover the fight
Of the warriors that hewed at the bull-hide bucklers, and rained down blows
Evermore on the tasselled targets that shielded the hearts of their foes.
And the pitiless brass through the flesh of many a warrior tare,
Whosoever in turning had left his back but a moment bare:
Yea, clear through the buckler of many a hero the fierce thrust went.
And the towers all round and the battlements reeked with the blood besprent
Which the slaughter-fury of Troy and Achaia dashed about.
Yet not even so might they put the host of Achaia to rout;
But it was with them as with a toil-bowed woman righteous-souled—
In her scales be the weights and the wool, and the balance on high doth she hold
Poised level, that so may the hard-earned bread to her babes be doled;
So poised was the battle, and neither scale of the war sank down
Or ever to Hector Zeus vouchsafed the triumph-renown,
Ere first through Achaia's rampart the son of Priam sprang.
To the Trojans he cried, and his shout through the roar of the battle rang:
"On, horse-quelling Trojans, on!—dash down the Argives' wall!

Hurl ye the brands till a fiery rain on their galleys shall fall!
So spake he cheering them onward, and all they heard with
Onward they charged at the wall in a throng: by the tower-b
Scaled they the height, while gleamed in their hands keen-po
Then a stone that in front of the gateway stood seized Hecto
As a crag broad-set on its base, and with sharp peak piercing
Not two of the brawniest men of the people with tug and str
Might lightly upheave from the ground that stone, and set on
Such men as be now; yet with ease did he swing it on high a
Made light to his hand by Counsel-hider Kronos' son:—
And as when some shepherd wight in the one hand lightly ha
And uptosseth the fleece of a ram, and the weight unto him is
Even so that stone at the gate-planks Hector unswerving bor
At the fencing-beams that warded the massy-welded door,—
Twin-leaved were the gates, and high, and within were there
From post unto post cross-wise, and one bolt gripped them fa
Close came he, and planted him firmly, and hurled it amidst c
With his feet wide-set, that his uttermost strength might spee
Burst were the hinges asunder, the stone with its thunderbolt-
Fell inward, the gates roared loud, and against its resistless sw
Availed not the bars, and the planks sprang shivered to right
From its onrush; and Hector the glorious leapt through the b
With brows as the night sudden-falling, and flashed the terrib
Of the brass wherewithal he was sheathed, and he grasped tw
In his hands. There was none might have stayed him that m
he came,



Save the Gods, when he leapt through the gate, and with fire were his eyes aflame.
And he cried to the host of Troy, mid the press as he turned him about,
To scale the rampart: was none but obeyed that heart-stirring shout.
There were some swarmed over the wall forthright, there were some 'gan pour
Through the huge-framed gates: then fled the Danaans quaking sore
Mid the hollow galleys, and rose unceasing the battle-roar.








AUG 4

